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# MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT



# MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT

THOUGHTS OF A THINKER

COLLECTED AND EDITED

BY HIS FRIEND

JOHN P. KINGSLAND

*Author of "THE MAN CALLED JESUS"*

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New York

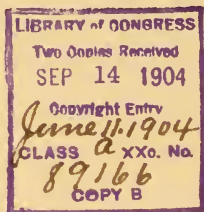
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To

*All Seekers After Truth  
Groping Thro' Darkness and Twilight  
Up to The Eternal Light,  
I Dedicate This Book,  
The Record of the Spiritual Experiences  
of  
That Friend of Mine  
Who Sought and  
Found*



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“I MAKE no claim to have done more than visit some of the outer courts of Truth. I cannot venture to think that my little plummet has sounded all the depths of Life; nay, I know that the shortness of my line places the deeper depths for ever beyond my reach.

“But this I say—can I say more?—with the utmost desire to think and to live Truth, *thus* do things appear to me; even *thus*, as I at present see, do what I am, and what the Great All is, project themselves to me in Thought.”

*Extract from one of my Friend's note-books.*

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# MAN AND HIS ENVIRONMENT

## INTRODUCTION

It will save a good deal of explanation on my part, and enable the reader to understand much more clearly both the reason which induced me to undertake the task of editing these thoughts, and also the main drift of the thoughts themselves, if I at once place before him the following letter:—

“London, March 13, 18—.

“MY DEAR K.,

“I have for many years, as you are aware, been gathering materials for a work on some of the higher aspects of Life, regarded as much as possible from the scientific standpoint of the present day.

“It has been my dearest wish to complete this task before I was called away, but I see now that this is not to be. The hand of death is upon me; I can no longer write, or even revise what I have already written.

“I am loath, however, to relinquish the hope I have so long cherished of giving to the world something which shall be of use to it in the present crisis—something which shall help it to find its way through the mists of doubt, and the darkness

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of Agnosticism and Materialism, to the clear region of Faith and the brightness of true Life.

"I may have over-estimated my ability to do this, but I cannot over-estimate the joy and delight which I have found in seeking for Truth, and in attempting to live by it, as far as I have apprehended it; and I would fain, in however imperfect a manner, lead others to see and delight in it too.

"My original intention in this matter I cannot now carry out, but I think that some selections from what I have written might be made by a competent editor, and issued in the form of a small volume.

"I do not know any one half so able, or, I believe, half so willing, to undertake this labor of love as yourself, my dear K., and I have accordingly directed that all my manuscripts shall be placed at your disposal, and leave it to your absolute discretion to deal with them as you think fit.

"I make only one stipulation—do not publish my name. If there is any Truth in what I have written, it will be its own witness, and will not be benefited by the endorsement of an unknown individual; if it is not worth the world's attention, it will be better if I and it sink into oblivion together.

"Hoping, my dear K., that in putting this matter into your hands I do not abuse the privileges of that friendship which we have so long enjoyed together, or burden you with a too heavy responsibility,

"I remain,

"Your faithful friend,

"—— ———."

I was both shocked and surprised on receiving this letter, shocked to find that my friend was so

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seriously ill, for though I had heard that he was unwell I had not regarded it as more than a passing indisposition; surprised that he had selected me for the task of arranging and publishing his manuscripts. We had in former years been exceedingly intimate, but our friendship was interrupted by my removal from Town, and though we occasionally corresponded, we had not often met since. Previously to my receiving this letter, we had not seen each other for many months.

I had no opportunity of either seeing or writing to him concerning this serious responsibility which he desired to place on my shoulders, for only two days after he wrote to me I received intelligence that he was dead. Though I did not feel at all competent to undertake the task which had so unexpectedly devolved upon me, I did not consider myself justified in ignoring the claims of friendship, and determined to do my best.

In due time the manuscript arrived. The reader may be sure that if the prospect of undertaking the work of editing them had appeared formidable to me previously, it became a hundred times more so when on examination I found them to consist, to a very large extent, of fragmentary notes, jotted down, apparently at random, in a number of notebooks, on slips of paper, and even on the backs of envelopes. I was in despair. Summoning up my courage, however, I proceeded to attack the formidable mass.

As I went on, two things became clear to me. The first was that the majority of the notes were written so entirely from the standpoint of my

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friend's personal experience that it would be impossible to dissociate them from their author. They contained a record of his own inner life—of his lifelong search for Truth. As a personal history they were extremely interesting, but to separate the man from his thoughts was impossible.

The second characteristic which I soon noted was that my friend's thinking gave evidence of a marked development. I was able to arrange the notes fairly well in chronological order; and not only were the later ones fuller and less fragmentary than those which belonged to an earlier date, but they gave evidence of a firmer grasp of Truth, and they breathed a greater confidence of conviction.

It struck me, after a time, that these characteristics might be turned to account, and help me to solve the problem how best to arrange the notes, and in what form to publish them. It did not seem impossible to keep in mind the main purpose for which they were written, while, at the same time, making them expository of my friend's mental and spiritual growth.

This, accordingly, is what I have attempted in the following pages. I have as far as possible endeavored to let my friend speak for himself; but throughout the book (and especially in the earlier chapters, which contain the more fragmentary notes) I have connected the thoughts by a thread of comment and exposition. My intimate acquaintance with him in former years (which, to a great extent, covered the period during which the earlier notes were written), recollections of which have been revived by frequent perusal of his manuscripts,

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has fortunately enabled me to do this most completely where it has most been required. I would gladly have kept myself altogether in the background, but the character of the material at my disposal seemed to make the plan I have adopted by far the best, if not the only feasible one.

I must leave to the reader the task of forming his own estimate both of the author of these thoughts and of the thoughts themselves. My business has been to record faithfully: let others judge.

Concerning his outward life, little need be said—little, indeed, can be said by me, since the materials for a complete biographical sketch have not come into my possession. At the time when I first became acquainted with him, he was living quietly and in seclusion, contented with his books and with a very limited circle of friends. For some years he was blessed with the companionship of a charming and devoted wife, and his home was brightened by the presence of a little daughter; but they both died, and he was left alone. To this heavy loss he seldom alluded; indeed, he rarely broke through the reserve he maintained on personal matters, and it was only from casual allusions that I discovered that he had had a University education, and that at one time he had contemplated entering the Christian ministry. I never ascertained why he abandoned that intention.

The possession of a private income exempted him from the necessity of exerting himself to obtain a livelihood; and it was probably the lack of this stimulus which prevented him from completing before his death the work which he had undertaken.

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After the death of his wife and child he lived in almost complete retirement; not because this affliction had made him misanthropic, but because he had nothing to check his predisposition for solitude and meditation. Nevertheless, he found opportunities for accomplishing much quiet benevolence.

The main interest of his life, however, centers in his thoughts. He was essentially a thinker; if not an original thinker, at least an independent one.

In the spirit of an earnest seeker after Truth, he doubted, questioned, probed, with a boldness which frequently alarmed the more timid of his friends, and a persistency which embarrassed and fatigued the less thoughtful. And he had his reward; he sought, and he found. Had it been otherwise—had he failed, or had he arrived at merely negative conclusions, I would never have undertaken the task of giving the results of his thinking to the world. But there were such clear evidences, both in his calm and trustful spirit while he lived, and also in the manuscripts in which he was endeavoring to record the results of his thinking, that he did not seek in vain, but at length “beat his music out,” and apprehended a by no means small amount of the Truth for which he so earnestly sought, that my duty in the matter seemed plain.

The responsibility of withholding what might be helpful to so many who in these days are bewildered and perplexed by the conflicting voices of the age, seemed to me far greater than the responsibility of arranging and publishing it; and I accordingly undertook the task. It is in the hope that the thoughts of a man who combined great independence of

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thought, and no ordinary boldness of speculation, with the deepest faith in God, and the purest devotion and love for Jesus Christ, may help some who read to attain to the same faith and love, that I give these memorials of him to the world.



## CHAPTER I

### TRUTH

My friend was a seeker after Truth. This, combined with a striking independence of mind, was his most marked characteristic. You could not be in his society five minutes without discovering it. His perfect and loyal devotion to Truth was the bed-rock on which his character rested. Even those who did not understand the cause felt the effect from the moment of coming into his presence. They admitted not only that he "had a way of his own of putting things," but also that he had a manner of his own which impressed them greatly.

I have decided that I cannot do better than devote this first chapter to the attempt to make the reader acquainted with this characteristic of my friend, as far as possible, by means of selections from his notes.

He was a man who, while he earnestly and diligently sought for Truth, was never content to accept it without investigating the grounds on which it rested. He thought for himself; was not afraid to form his own opinions, and to hold them in the face of the world.

"I must think for myself," he writes in one of his note-books. "I cannot allow any other man, or any number of men, to do it for me. With the faculties and powers with which I have been en-



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dowed by Heaven I will examine this great Universe for myself, and see if it will respond to me; whether, if I knock persistently, the door of Truth will at length open to me; whether, if I seek diligently, I shall find satisfaction for the needs and cravings of my nature. I am conscious enough of my littleness, my feebleness. The illimitable vastness of the Universe at times appalls me. But surely, if I cannot find out the secrets for myself, I cannot rely on the conclusions which others, similarly constituted and environed, may have arrived at in their attempts to unravel mysteries. I do not refuse their aid. I will thankfully benefit by their experience, when that is possible, and gladly listen to any answers which, when they have questioned it reverently, desiring light and truth, they may report to me that the Universe has returned to their questioning. More especially will I attend to them when they seem to have gained knowledge, or light, or joy, or peace, which I have not. Can I afford to do otherwise, any more than the mariner alone upon the sea can afford to refuse to listen to the news of land, of current, or of storm which other voyagers may report that they have encountered on their way?

“But more than this I cannot do. Whether their experiences are true or false, I must voyage on, and prove them to be the one or the other by my own experience. A messenger direct from the Eternal would not benefit me, unless I not only believed his message but voyaged as he told me. Otherwise I should but continue to toss on the

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heaving waves, or to drift helplessly with the tides and before the storms."

I find another note in a similar strain in another of his note-books—

"I cannot be content with any other man's explanation of the facts of life, or with the inductions which he has made from them. Are not the facts there for me to see too? and have I not also a mind capable of combining and arranging them? Another man's observations and explanations are, without doubt, valuable, since they help me to see for myself, and, if they are true, I shall no doubt sooner or later succeed in verifying them. But I should scorn myself if I accepted them without making any attempt to find out whether they were so or not. I would far rather stand before men and say, 'I do not know; I do not understand; I have no theory,' than pretend—by advocating a theory which I had not attempted to verify—that I had unravelled the complex mass of phenomena of which it claims to be the explanation, and reduced them to order, when, as a matter of fact, they still remained for me among the unknown, or, at any rate, the undigested facts of the Universe."

My friend had the greatest reverence for facts. In considering them he always tried to get rid of all prejudice, and to avoid prepossessions. He was not a man to rush to conclusions, either. He always hesitated to formulate a theory until he thought he had a sufficient number of facts before him, and sufficiently understood their significance and their mutual relations to justify him in so doing. Even then he only advanced his theory

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tentatively, and was always willing to abandon it when he found that new facts, or perhaps a reconsideration of the old ones, rendered it untenable.

"There are two ways," he writes, "of dealing with the facts with which experience acquaints us. The first one—the way which most people adopt—is to try to compress the facts to the mould of some theory shaped out of partial and unverified prepossessions, and to ignore all such other facts as are out of harmony with this theory.

"The other—and more excellent way—is to make it a first duty to accept, and to give due weight to, every fact, however strange and out of harmony with our preconceptions or our previous experience it may be; and, if we formulate theories at all (as indeed we must), to hold them with sufficient lightness of grasp to enable us to surrender them if necessary; or, if such a necessity does not arise, to modify them so as to bring them into harmony with our enlarging experience.

"No genuine seeker after Truth can, for long, rest content with any theory or system of thought which attempts to 'explain' the Universe. His views will broaden, and its generalizations continually require to be modified, as Truth in its beauty unveils her face to the worshipper.

"The mind which tenaciously clings to any one theory or system of thought builds for itself a prison-house, shuts itself up in a little imaginary world of its own creation, bearing little relation to the real world around it, and is prevented from seeing that real world aright, as people who put on spectacles which do not suit their sight are hin-

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dered by them from seeing things around them.”

In another place he writes—

“The tendency to generalize—to formulate a theory, to attempt an explanation which will unify the knowledge which we are continually acquiring of the Universe—is one native to the mind. But it is evident that since experience is continually enlarging, a man must be prepared to modify continually the theories which he constructs to ‘explain’ his experiences, otherwise thought and life will speedily find themselves at variance.

“But a very large number of men have neither the strength of mind nor the inclination continually to modify their theories after they have once formed them. Often a foolish pride makes them hold to those they have first adopted, and causes them to shut their eyes to all those facts which will not harmonize with them. This is fatal to both intellectual and spiritual growth.

“There is no doubt that there are many subjects concerning which we have not yet collected sufficient data to justify the formation of any theory at all. When, in spite of this, men do formulate their theories—filling up the gaps in their knowledge from the stores of the imagination—they almost invariably blindfold their eyes to the truth, and permanently incapacitate themselves from seeing it. It is quite possible to recognize facts without being able to reconcile them; the man who keeps himself alive to facts and his mind open to the reception of new ones, but refrains from hasty attempts to generalize from them, is much nearer Truth than the

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man who is ready on the shortest notice with a theory on every question under the sun.

"With regard to a considerable number of the great problems of life, I am convinced that it is best not to have any theory at all. He was a wise man who said that the chief thing in life was not to solve its great problems, but to feel them greatly."

Very considerable credit is due to my friend for being able to write as he does in the above extracts. For I gathered from him that, in his earlier years, he had been much under the bondage of theories, which had greatly hampered his mental development. "I inherited," he told me on one occasion, "a very large stock of prejudices and prepossessions, which it took me a good many years, and an immense amount of trouble, to get rid of."

He was very reticent on this subject, and I never got to understand fully this stage of his intellectual development. Nor have I been able to find among his manuscripts more than a few—and those mostly indirect—allusions to it. I gathered, however, from his occasional references to it in conversation, that it was a time of deep gloom and depression, the memory of which was extremely painful to him.

The following note, which I have found in one of his earlier note-books, was apparently written during this time of doubt and conflict, and gives a glimpse of the workings of his mind:—

"How few men rise above their age—above the thoughts, habits, customs, and views of life which happen to be in vogue!

"How they go about their daily work, and take

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their daily pleasures—these thoughtless millions—as if they stood on solid ground, ignorant of the fact that there is but a thin film separating them from—from what? Break the crust of habit, examine the conventions, the views of life, the current axioms of men: what are they worth? Do they correspond with reality? Do they give a correct or adequate account of life, of the world, of God? Far from it!

“The ground which most men think is solid is not bottom rock; it is only a film, the hardened scum which the slow-moving centuries have accumulated over the molten stream of existence. When you break through it, you find yourself face to face with great realities, mighty mysteries, in the awful presence of which your theories, your explanations, your ‘views,’ are seen to be totally inadequate, if not ridiculous.

“You find yourself in the presence of a vast system of things of which you know neither the whence nor the whither. The great mystery that *you are* is matched by the equally great mystery that you are in the presence of a mighty Something which is *not* you.

“What is the nature, the character of that Something? Is there an order, a harmony, a purpose in it, which we can discover, and with which we can get into harmony—Thought to match our thought, Will to match our will, a Heart to beat in sympathy with our heart, Love to meet our love? Can we trust it? Will it respond to our trust, meet our needs, *satisfy* us?



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“It is easy to ask these questions; but how difficult to find the true answer to them! For my own part, I can at present only see what the answer *ought* to be. I am by no means prepared to assert confidently that this answer is the true one. What I do see is that either there must be complete satisfaction for all my desires, hopes, aspirations, and capacities in this Great Something not ourselves; *i. e.* it must be infinitely perfect, infinitely *good*, or it were better for me, better for every son of man, that he had never been born.”

In the following fragment also, though it was written (as the date at the commencement of the note-book shows) several years later, and does not directly refer to his own experiences, traces of the mental crisis through which he passed can, I think, be discovered:—

“It is a striking fact that many—in fact, I think, most—of the men whom the world has come to regard as its noblest and best have had to undergo a period of great mental unrest and spiritual darkness before they have arrived at that clearness of vision which has constituted their greatness. They have had—all of them, without an exception, so far as I know—to be born again.

“They have been aroused from their contented acceptance of the ideas and conventions of the times in which their lot has been cast, by doubts and questionings which they could not stifle. The crust of received opinion on the great questions of life has crumbled beneath their feet. They have asked themselves the startling question, ‘On what ground of certainty does my life, as I am living it,

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rest?' And they have found, to their utter dismay, that neither their intellectual conceptions nor their moral conduct has been based on anything which they can recognize as convincingly stable and authoritative. They have suddenly found themselves face to face with the awful mystery of life, in a strange, unknown Universe, with all old landmarks obliterated or discredited, and no new ones discernible.

"An awful position! One which only the bravest souls have been able to face successfully; one from which even strong souls have shrunk appalled, and have desperately clung to any piece of wreckage which seemed to offer them support in the midst of the floods of great waters which have surged around them.

"But some have refused to give way to despair, even when all the old landmarks have been swept away, and the ordered world they have known has dissolved to a chaos. They have resolutely, dauntlessly determined to pursue the quest of Truth, even though all that they once deemed Truth has become to them a lie. They have stood up before the Universe, and boldly demanded to know what it is.

"And they have not demanded in vain. As they have watched and waited, questioned and probed, the old landmarks have one by one reappeared—the old landmarks which for them are no longer old but new, because they have, by hard experience, *verified* them. They have succeeded in disentangling from the rubbish and the fungus-growths, in which they have been embedded, the



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eternal truths of the Universe, and have henceforward ranked as seers—men who have based their lives, not on what other men have seen and thought and believed, but on the Truth as they themselves have seen and known it.”

If I had been able, I would very gladly have made the reader more fully acquainted with this most interesting portion of my friend's history. But, as I have said, he seldom alluded to it, and with the exception of the above extracts, I can find no references to it in his manuscripts.

I remember, however, that on one occasion, he spoke to me about that period of his life with some freedom—the only occasion, so far as I can remember, on which he broke through his reserve; and what he then said produced such a deep impression on my mind, that I am able to recall almost word for word the statement he then made to me. We were talking of the basis of religious certitude, and he alluded to his own early experience.

“I wanted to know the *Truth*,” he said, “for I felt then, as I still feel, that if satisfaction cannot be found by getting to know the Universe as it *is*, no permanent satisfaction can be arrived at by imagining it to be what it is *not*. I felt that if it is hopeless to gain satisfaction from reality, it is infinitely more hopeless to try to win it from delusion. It is hopeless for any man to try to live in security in an imaginary world; sooner or later he must come face to face with the truth, and if the truth is different from what he imagined, and does not justify the hopes and respond to the feelings which he

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has cherished, he will only find himself in a deeper hell who imagined that there was Love where there was only fate, and a Father's Heart where there was nothing but inexorable law.

"Therefore," he continued, "I was determined, if it was within my power to do so, to discover the Truth. Could I find in the Universe satisfaction for the deepest needs of my nature—for my spiritual capacities, cravings, and aspirations—even as I found satisfaction for my physical and intellectual faculties in the ordered world around me? or were these given to me only to delude, to mock, to damn me? I felt that I must either assure myself that the former alternative was the one which expressed the truth, assure myself that it was possible to attain to a life which was full and harmonious, because it was the result of the exercise of all the faculties of my complex nature (and I was conscious then, as I am conscious now, that the faculty, the craving—call it what you will—which made me yearn for *love* was the master-faculty and passion of my nature),—I say I felt that I must discover whether this was true, whether the Universe would respond to and satisfy *all* my needs, or whether it would (or could) not. To remain in doubt was torture to me. I felt that I would prefer to be definitely assured that the latter alternative was the correct one rather than remain in uncertainty. 'And if that is the truth,' I said to myself, 'I will cloak myself in a proud disdain of the Universe, and the demoniacal spirit who, in that case, is the central essence, and show by a stoical endurance and an unwearyed defiance that I will never consent to be his

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tool or plaything, but am his superior, even in the midst of my misery and despair.' ”

They were bold words—many will think far too bold—but I give them as I remember them (they made an indelible impression on my mind), because they so clearly reveal the spirit of the man. He was not required to carry them into effect; if he had been, this book would never have been written. In the following pages the reader will find abundant evidence of the fact that he found at length that satisfaction for his spiritual needs for which he so earnestly longed and so diligently sought, and in his later years based his life confidently and joyfully on the truth that God is Love.

It will be as well if, at this point, I endeavor to make the reader acquainted with the attitude which my friend adopted in his search for Truth. A clear understanding of his position will greatly help the reader in his perusal of the following chapters.

He took his stand on consciousness. “Here am I, with my various faculties and capacities,” he said to me on one occasion; “and there is the great Not-I all around me. Any knowledge which I can gain of this Not-I must be limited by the sum-total of the impressions which can affect my consciousness. All modes of the Not-I which cannot thus affect me must be unknown and unknowable to me; any truth which my faculties are not able to apprehend—which it is not their function to recognize and respond to—must be to me as if non-existent.”

This position, however, did not lead him, as it has led so many in these days, to agnosticism, or to the denial of all religion. He was unable to

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adopt the meagre creed which has apparently satisfied so many thoughtful men of the present generation. While sympathizing to a large extent with the scientific spirit of the age, the conclusions which so many of its representatives had arrived at on the deepest questions of life were to him eminently unsatisfactory. He had a large heart, and, though he did not realize this till long afterwards, he thirsted for the living God.

Groping for light, the question at length presented itself to him—whether he might not have other faculties than those which scientific men exercise in their investigations, and whether, by the right use of these, he might not be able to apprehend higher truths than those which concern phenomena, and so win that light and joy and love for which his spirit longed.

Taking the natural promptings of his heart as his guide, he set out on the quest for spiritual truth. And he did not seek in vain.

By slow degrees the conviction on which, in his later years, he based all his thinking—all his life—took possession of him. Baldly stated, that conviction was, that if a man trustfully exercises the higher, the heart faculties which he possesses, he will find the Non-Ego respond, just as surely as it responds when a man exercises any of the other faculties with which he has been endowed. He became increasingly convinced of the reality and the supreme worth of “the things which are not seen”—of a “Spiritual Universe”—with which man can sustain relations (“correspond” is the term he most frequently made use of) by means of his “spir-

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itual faculties," as certainly as he can "correspond" with the material universe by means of his senses and intellect. As he grew older, he held with increasing firmness to the belief that the Universe can be resolved into tones of Love by the exercise of the "heart faculties," just as surely as it can be resolved into Law by the exercise of the intellectual faculties.

This conviction—this belief—he arrived at, as I have said, by slow degrees. The evidences that he was winning his way to it are almost entirely lacking in the earlier manuscripts, and it is only fully and clearly set forth in those which were written within a short time of his death. He could not have written thus in his earlier years—

"Not with the intellect, but with the heart, must we discover what the heart of the Universe is—whether it responds to our longings, needs, and aspirations with cold indifference or passionless Law, or throbs in sympathy with all our fears and pains and woes, yearns with a mother's tenderness to soothe and comfort us, and with an inexhaustible patience watches over us through all the mistakes and sins of our lives, only refusing to remove the causes of our woes because it knows that it is only by helping us to rise victoriously above them that we can be educated for that perfect bliss of living which, most assuredly, is in store for the soul that has tuned the discords of its being to the harmony and the infinite sweetness of the music of its heart of Love."

But as the reader proceeds, he will find this conviction becoming more and more the key-note of all his thinking; he will find him dwelling more

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and more on the truth that God is Love, as the central truth of life.

The spiritual convictions to which my friend attained necessarily made their influence felt on his philosophical conceptions. He regarded philosophy as the handmaiden of religion. He looked to religion for the solution of many of the problems which philosophy despaired of solving; he looked to philosophy to place religion in a position which would ensure it the esteem of all thoughtful, earnest men.

"The heart and the intellect have no right to be at variance," he writes. "If they are both allowed free scope, while at the same time they recognize their mutual dependence, they will bear witness with united voice to the infinite Truth which they have the power to apprehend—the Truth, in apprehending which they find their life. Only, in dignity and importance the heart must always rank before the intellect; for Truth as apprehended by the intellect can never be more than relatively true; it is the heart that apprehends the Real."

Following this line of thought, his constant endeavor was to supplement all his intellectual knowledge by spiritual knowledge, and as far as possible to express, in terms of this higher knowledge, the conclusions at which his intellect arrived concerning man, and life, and God.

"Browning is right: 'All's Love, and all's Law.' But Love is higher than Law, and if ever we are to apprehend this great scheme of things in the midst of which we find ourselves *as a unity*, and to behold all forces and all phenomena radiating from one



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point, and controlled by one impulse, it will have to be as the infinitely varied manifestations of Love—Love which is at one and the same time both Force and Law—the ultimate, eternal Spiritual Fact. But this truth can only be apprehended by hearts that love.”

A somewhat longer note may be appropriately inserted here, as it throws some light on the character of his thinking, and foreshadows those developments of it which I have attempted to embody in the succeeding chapters.

“Truth is like the eternal stars in the infinite vault of heaven; our *conceptions* of it are like the fantastic shapes which men draw on the celestial map, by which the position of these is roughly defined. Most men only look at the map, and so never gain more than a second-hand idea of Truth. To them the vision of Truth is not an ‘open vision.’ They content themselves with other men’s reports of what is to be seen. Truth’s sublime features are only dimly (and often grotesquely) presented to them through the medium of other minds. Few look straight at the eternal heavens; but when they do, what becomes of theories and systems, the Great Bears and Orions of the map of truth?”

“Very strange it is, when we come to think about it, that so many men—the majority of the race, in point of fact—should be content to exist in this unreal world of ideas, these (by them) unverified conceptions of truth. They are surrounded by realities; and yet they prefer to accept other men’s statements concerning these realities, and in the majority of cases make no attempt to verify them.

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“Concerning religious truths especially, we see this strange preference most widely displayed; indeed, there is as yet no general recognition of the fact that religious views *can* be tested in this way, that they are no more than the formulated expressions of truths everywhere discernible by the seeing eye.

“A widespread delusion has prevailed in all ages of the world’s history, and still prevails, that the truths of religion have no direct bearing on the life which men live in the world, that they only deal with the life which is to come.

“Not regarding religious matters, therefore, as matters of immediate and vital interest, they have relegated them to a professional class—to the priesthood—which itself, in the vast majority of cases, has had no vital grasp of Truth, but has merely retailed it second-hand.

“Men’s minds have thus lost touch with reality. Their only acquaintance with Truth has been ‘through a glass, darkly’—the glass of other men’s minds,—not ‘face to face.’

“It may be quite true that the ideas of Truth which they have accepted have not infrequently been the best intellectual expressions of spiritual realities which the men who formulated them (attempting to record their experiences and convictions of ‘things not seen’) could employ. But however admirable these intellectual expressions of Truth may be, and however accurately they may have presented (or, rather, *represented*) the vision of Truth which those who formulated them saw, they are of little value to the man who has not veri-



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fied them for himself. For unless a man thus verifies the reports of others concerning the Real, he cannot become *alive* to the truth of which they are the intellectual expression. They do not represent to him the Facts of the Universe, truths in which he lives, and moves, and has his being.

"A man may indeed, and many men do, live *by* these unverified ideas,—may regulate his conduct, and form his notions of life and of God from them. But that is a very different thing from living in conscious relation with the realities of which they are the intellectual expression; and his conception of things—his entire intellectual world—will be continually in danger of being shaken, if not reduced to chaos, by the ruthless intrusion of facts not taken into account in the scheme he has accepted as 'the truth.'

"I do not ignore the fact that there is a stage of spiritual childhood, as well as of physical childhood, through which every man must pass—a stage during which he must be dependent on others, and must accept the statements concerning spiritual things which they impart to him. Law with its servitude is a necessary preliminary to the Gospel with its freedom. But it should never be forgotten that this is a childish state, pertaining only to the beginnings of life, and by no means to be rested in.

"I yield all honor to the man who, while his faith is weak and his knowledge of spiritual things small, accepts and strives to live by what others tell him about the eternal realities. But if he is in even the smallest degree in vital touch with these realities (or as soon as ever he gets into vital touch with

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them) ;—if, or as soon as ever faith is living, and knowledge, true knowledge,—emancipation from servile adhesion to the conceptions and the teaching of spiritual schoolmasters is bound to commence, and, sooner or later, to be completely achieved. Such a man will come to know the Real with a true, direct knowledge, and as he does this he will not merely be able, but will feel constrained, to mould his conceptions of it into such forms as are to him most true and helpful”

The reader can hardly have failed to observe that in the preceding extracts my friend endeavors to avoid using the term “God.” In the succeeding chapters the same peculiarity frequently appears, and I may as well say a word or two about it here.

He had no prejudice against the word; indeed, he says (in a note too long to quote here) that he would have preferred it, if its connotation had not been so variable and so uncertain. He very truly remarks that “the word ‘God’ conveys a different meaning to every person who uses it; in using it every one reads into it the particular ideas with which it is associated in his own mind.”

For this reason, as well as because he was of the opinion that the use of other terms gave freshness to his thought, and enabled him to apprehend more firmly the eternal truths which he was attempting to lay hold of—“those eternal truths which, though they have been known for ages, must be rediscovered by nearly every generation, and reclothed in the language which best suits the intellectual needs and the spiritual enlightenment of the age”—he preferred to make use of other terms.

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The one he perhaps most frequently employs is the term "Universe." By it he does not mean simply the material universe, but "all manifestations and impressions of the Non-Ego which affect our consciousness—the sum-total of the world without us, of which we can gain knowledge by the exercise of all the parts and faculties, physical, mental, and spiritual, of our nature."

The reader will do well to bear this definition of the term in mind, and to remember that in my friend's mind it was associated with all those ideas with which the term "God" is associated in the minds of those who have the loftiest and most spiritual conceptions of the Deity.

It will be observed, however, that he does not confine himself to this term. Whether because he felt at times that it was cold and unsatisfactory, or because he felt it to be helpful to vary his phraseology, or perhaps because the religious teaching of his early years had left too strong an impression on his mind to permit him to discard altogether the language in which it had been conveyed to him, I do not know. Certain it is that he not infrequently—especially in his later years—used in addition such terms as "the Eternal," "the Eternal Spirit," "the Eternal Fact," and others. He seemed, in fact, to feel habitually the inadequacy of language to depict the truths which he strove to express. He is continually on the lookout for new terms in which to embody his thought, while all the time he is haunted by the conviction that the great realities he is endeavoring to unfold can never be adequately set forth in terms of human speech.

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That his avoidance of the term "God" did not result from the absence of strong religious convictions will, I think, be already evident to the reader. He was undoubtedly "unorthodox,"—unconventional to an extreme in his mode of expressing them, but the following extract will convince all thoughtful minds that he was a religious man in the truest and deepest sense of the term:—

"The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God expresses the truth that the Universe will sustain to us relations of a similar kind to those which a father sustains to his children—relations which the parental relationship alone, of all human relationships, can adequately typify. The character of this relationship, and the moral and spiritual basis on which alone it can be fully established, necessitates the belief that the Universe is possessed of life of at least as high a quality as the life which we possess—life endowed with powers of a similar order to our highest powers, those powers the possession of which alone enables us to sustain this relationship, *i. e.* the powers which belong to personality. Whatever further modes of life the Universe may be possessed of, whatever may be the ultimate nature of that ineffable Spirit which fills the fathomless abysses of space, and the endless years of eternity with the pulses of the timeless life, of this at least the truth which the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God endeavors to express, assures us:—that we can lean on it as the infant leans on its mother's breast, can look up to it with trust and love as a child looks up to his father, and can derive from it complete satisfaction for all the deepest cravings of our na-

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ture—those deepest cravings which make the joys of home the sweetest joys of life, but are not there-with wholly satisfied, but look beyond for that deeper satisfaction which only communion with the Eternal Spirit can bring.

“The Universe, I repeat, could not give us this satisfaction, could not sustain these relations with us, were it not possessed of life as we are possessed of life, *i. e.* if it had not a living will, a will animated by that disposition, tuned to that key-note, which is the only key-note to which the human relationship of father and son can be rightly tuned—the key-note of love. A stone, a mountain, or a tree cannot sustain these relations with us, cannot display fatherly qualities; nor could the Universe if it were nothing more than an aggregate of these. These relations are peculiar to personalities: in order to sustain them the Universe must be possessed of Personality.

“The record stands out in the pages of history that some men—nay, many men—have found by living experience that the Universe *can* sustain these relations with man. They have found that it possesses not merely those properties which the material universe exhibits, not merely life to the degree in which life manifests itself in the lower creation, but life as we are acquainted with it in its highest forms in humanity—in fatherhood and motherhood.

“But this experience can only be enjoyed by those who put themselves into the fitting attitude, the attitude of *sonship*. Not till man adopts the filial attitude towards the Universe, and approaches it in the filial spirit, does he place himself in a position to

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discover whether it is capable of sustaining, and willing to sustain, this relationship with him; whether it will respond to, and prove itself worthy of, the trust he reposes in it; whether it can and will repay love with love; whether to those who cry to it, 'My Father,' it will with satisfying clearness reply, 'My Child.'

"I am convinced that no one who has reverently, perseveringly, and in sincerity put the Universe to that test has ever been disappointed with the result."

Before I conclude this introductory chapter, I think that I am justified in including in it the following note. It was written, I believe, not long before my friend died, and its tone of calm confidence witnesses convincingly to the fact that he was one of those who have "striven, achieving calm," and that his thoughts on life, and man, and God were

"Thoughts which at last shall lead

To some clear, firm assurance of a satisfying creed."

"A wise passivity is the true secret of living. It is a thousand pities that man is so often occupied and distracted by speculations about himself, his nature, his destiny, and the like, instead of accepting with cheerful confidence the constitution with which his Maker has endowed him, and lying open, with all his faculties alert, to the sweet influences which Heaven is ceaselessly bringing to bear upon him.

"Truth comes—is bound to come—to the man who leaves his doors open. We are only wasting



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time and energy when we shut the doors and curiously examine our interiors.

“Leave speculations; live!—with faculties alive to every impression; with a mind prepared to receive every new truth, however strange and startling; with a spirit surrendered to the guidance of its primary instincts, faith and love; and slowly, perhaps, but surely, thou shalt glide into the infinite ocean of Truth, and shalt find light, and wisdom, and beauty, and righteousness, and joy, and love more than sufficient to satisfy all thy cravings, as thou art borne further and further upon its infinite expanse.

“Truth will never disappoint, will never fail to satisfy the seeker. The Universe contains infinite heights and depths of it,—an inexhaustible store, ever awaiting appropriation, never to be fully appropriated. The finite cannot exhaust the infinite, but it can derive unending joy and delight from the endeavor to exhaust it, and never-failing satisfaction for ever-expanding powers.

“This is the high, the eternal life which man has been created to live, and he who elects to live it will find that it is supremely good, supremely satisfying. Ever seeking and ever finding Truth, and living in and by it as he finds it, he will be able to say to every querulous objector, to every disappointed worldling, to every sneering sceptic, ‘Let life seem what it may to you, to me to live is continuously a satisfying delight, a sufficient justification alike of my own existence and of the ways of Him who made me.’ ”

Such, in the tone and temper of his mind, in the earnestness with which he sought for Truth, in the

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spirit in which he grappled with the great problems of life, in the way in which he, after strife, "achieved calm," was my friend, as I knew him when alive, and as I have found him to be in his writings. Of him it may be truly said—

"He fought his doubts, and gather'd strength:  
He would not make his judgment blind;  
He faced the spectres of the mind  
And laid them: thus he came at length  
To find a stronger faith his own."

In the following chapters, the notes of which are, indeed, in many cases, only expansions and developments of the thoughts embodied in the extracts I have given in this one—the reader may find much that he will be unable to agree with, but nothing, I think (at any rate my friend thought), radically inconsistent with, or essentially out of harmony with, the fundamental conviction at which, after long conflict, he arrived, on which he rested, and into tune with which he endeavored most earnestly to bring all his thoughts, and all his life (to hold and to live by which surely entitles a man to the name of Christian)—the conviction that God is Love.



## CHAPTER II.

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The problems involved in the existence and the present condition of the human race exercised a peculiar fascination over my friend, and were studied by him with the keenest interest. His notes on these subjects are very numerous, and in the present chapter I put before the reader a few selections. They are most of them from his earlier manuscripts, and in the succeeding chapters some modifications of the views embodied in some of these extracts will probably be noted; but the reader will find in them all that note of faith, that deep and sincere conviction of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, which appears more and more clearly in all that he wrote after he had emerged from that conflict with doubt to which I have alluded in the previous chapter.

The following extract will give the reader some idea of the point of view from which he contemplated mankind:—

“Human nature, as we see it, presents the spectacle of conditioned personality, as yet not fully acquainted with or having full control over its conditions, nor having fully adjusted them to its environment.

“The extent and the right use of his powers man

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is at present learning from experience; but he has as yet only imperfectly succeeded in doing either; hence the sin, the misery, and the confusion of life.

“Why the Eternal should allow man thus to find out his powers for himself, and the right use of them, we cannot say, any more than we can say why He has given human nature the powers and constitution which it has, instead of a different one; why, that is to say, He has conditioned personality as we find it to be conditioned, with a body, with five senses, and with a mind. Can we, however, conceive of any other plan (than this of allowing humanity to find out for itself the extent and right use of its powers) which would have better suited a being endowed with the power of choice? The ultimate reason of the great world-development in which we find ourselves we cannot know; but since the Eternal has adopted that plan and no other, and has given us such a constitution as we have and no other, more serious objections can be brought forward against any other plan of bringing man to perfection, than against that one which we find the Eternal to have adopted. Thus, to have implanted in man the plainest intuition as to the right way in which to use his powers, could not ensure (inasmuch as he has the power of choice in the use of them) that he would follow that intuition; and any compulsion in the use of them would annihilate this power of choice. It seems to me that a conditioned personality, *i. e.* a finite being endowed with self-consciousness and the power of choice, must inevitably, when it first wakes up to the consciousness that it possesses various powers, and the freedom

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to use them (whether it have implanted in it an intuition regarding the right use of them or not), misuse them, or use them in pure wilfulness, till checked by the inevitable consequences resulting from such a course of action. Not till it finds out by experience that such and such a use of them results in pain, misery, and death, will it avoid this use or abuse of them; and it *will* find out in this way (because it has will), however clear the (supposed) intuition with regard to the right use of them may be.

“What, then, it *can* find out in this way, and in all probability *would* (even if it had implanted in it clear indications as to the right way to adjust its faculties to its environment), have found out in this way, in spite of such indications, the Eternal is allowing it to find out thus.

“The Eternal wastes nothing. His means are always competent to accomplish His purposes; but never more than competent,—there are no superfluous means. And granting that such indications could have been implanted in the first place in a conditioned personality without hampering its freedom (which seems doubtful), they would have been superfluous, seeing that without them it could find out from experience what these intuitions would convey; and *would* so find out probably, whether they were there or not; scorning all such intuitions till experience had taught it to value them, and only valuing them to the extent to which experience had taught it to do so.”

This, of course, is the doctrine of development, which, as I understand him, he would apply to the

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entire nature of man. The same idea comes out in the following note on Heredity:—

“The subject of heredity has not yet received the attention it deserves from religious teachers and philosophers; for its importance it is almost impossible to over-estimate. Religion seems dimly to have felt this in the importance she attaches to the doctrine of original sin. That doctrine contains the unscientific statement of the truth; where it errs is in attaching responsibility to the individual for the whole sin of the race which he inherits. It was forgotten that responsibility only begins when the individual begins to use the stock-in-trade of which, when he wakes to self-consciousness, he finds himself possessed; since, as he had no hand in providing himself with the faculties or the constitution which he discovers himself to have, he cannot be held responsible for its quality.

“Religion has hitherto devoted her attention almost exclusively to the abstract and less important part of the problem, and has left untouched that part which deals with the individual.

“The question as to man’s condition when he first became a ‘living soul,’ and the nature of ‘the Fall’ (if Fall there was), is doubtless of great speculative interest; but it is speculative, and not practical. To lay the burden of accumulated sin, which he never committed, had no chance of remedying, and probably loathes, on the individual, is monstrous as well as absurd. The practical part of the inquiry begins with the recognition of the fact that we have tendencies within us which require to be curbed and corrected, as well as tendencies which should be

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fostered and encouraged; that, owing to the presence of 'sin' within us, the duty devolves upon us of weeding and pruning the garden of our natures, as well as the duty of tending and watering. This work every man must do for himself, discovering by experience where the one or the other is required; for since Nature never casts two souls in the same mould, no rules which one man may find it expedient to work by will do for any one else.

"Nature gives to every man a certain imperfect constitution—a certain stock-in-trade of faculties, temperament, etc., and a pattern, an ideal,\* by which to work, and she says, 'With these materials shape me a structure according to this ideal.'

"The constitution, or stock-in-trade, is different for every man; he has had no hand in bringing it together, and is not accountable for its production; but strictly does Nature demand of him an account of the use he makes of it, and strictly does she demand a reckoning for all waste and all bad work.

"The patent fact that the ideal, as well as the stock-in-trade, is variable, and in no two men alike, might at first sight seem to imply partiality and unfairness on Nature's part. But in reality it is not so. There is ever a perfect adjustment between the ideal and the stock-in-trade; if the stock-in-trade is poor, the ideal is low, and the consequent responsibility is the same, relatively, as when the stock-in-trade is good and the accompanying ideal lofty.

"In fact, the constitution, or stock-in-trade, forms its own ideal; the type necessarily suggests the anti-

\*What he refers to is not quite clear. I imagine that he has conscience chiefly in his mind.

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type, as a shadow suggests the sun; and every improvement in the type, or stock-in-trade, is inevitably accompanied by a corresponding improvement in the antitype or ideal.

"Hence the reward of faithfulness, the result of accepting the responsibility imposed upon us of approximating the actual to the ideal, and steadfastly endeavoring to realize it, is an improved stock-in-trade, and its accompanying higher Ideal—in other words, more Life.

"This is the truth set forth in Christ's parable of the talents (Matt. xxv. 14-20; Luke xix. 12-27). The man who has ten has to make ten more; the man who has one has only to make one more. Having been faithful, they have a greatly increased stock-in-trade with which to start again with; for bountiful Nature does not reward by simple addition, nor even by multiplication; her progression is geometric; the faithful user of the ten talents has as his reward not ten more talents, but ten *cities*.

"The man who would not use his talent has it taken away from him, and is cast into the outer darkness. So it is in life. The man who faithfully tries to use his powers and opportunities finds himself rewarded out of all proportion to his deserts; the man who will not use them, but neglects or misuses them, is shut out from life, from joy, from all success.

"The sweep of heredity stretches across the full chord of human powers, from physical characteristics up to will and when accorded full recognition, leaves scant room for originality. Personality itself only just finds standing-room, and in cases



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of insanity is apparently pushed off the board

“Originality (so called) would seem to be simply Nature’s cunning mixture in extraordinary fashion of traits not commonly (sometimes not previously) found in conjunction. Personality is strictly limited by the stock-in-trade with which it is endowed, and cannot move hand or foot except in obedience to the conditions which surround it. But it is rendered strictly accountable for the use or abuse of its stock; by wise use being enabled to expand its narrow house till it becomes spacious as the heavens; by abuse building itself a prison in which to fret and rave in impotent longing or maddening despair.

“In thus dwelling on the responsibility which rests upon every man of making the best use of his stock-in-trade, I do not ignore the fact of the Divine Will moulding men. Right relations with the Universe can only be entered into by us when we hold the conviction that the Eternal desires that we should attain to the ideal which we find within us, and will co-operate with us in our endeavor to attain to it. In other words, we must have faith; we must trust that the Power which is at the centre of the Universe possesses in perfection all the qualities which we possess in imperfection; which we must have free room to exercise, and fitting nutriment to satisfy, if peace and happiness are ever to be ours. We must trust that if we throw ourselves into the stream of tendency, flowing towards what we instinctively feel to be the Highest and Best, we shall have all the forces of the Universe on our side.

“Experience will prove whether this is so. But we must start from trust. Indeed, we shall be

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obliged continually to fall back on it. For trust is the only fitting posture for the finite to assume in the presence of the Infinite. Man, in the midst of a Universe still in the making, and only one among unnumbered millions of spirits new to the mystery of existence, and struggling up to light through the darkness of error and the mists of doubt and sin, cannot presume to understand the scope of the beneficent purposes of the Eternal. We must trust; co-operate with His purposes as far as we can apprehend them, and, by patient listening, try to catch more plainly the sound of the notes to which the Universe is tuned.

“And if—as I have come more and more firmly to believe—we are justified in reposing an implicit faith in the Man Christ Jesus—justified in accepting His manifestation of Life as the manifestation of the Life of the Eternal, and His manifestation of Love as the revelation of the key-note of the Universe—then we can face the stern truth of heredity, and acknowledge that the Eternal does ‘visit the sins of the fathers on the children, to the third and fourth generation,’ and yet not despair. We can look fairly in the face the fact that we are, in all our powers and capacities, all our strength and all our weakness, all our virtues and all our vices, the product of the generations that are past;—we can look that fact full in the face and still hope. These constitute the envelope in which our personality has been set. But the envelope is not a cast-iron one; rather is it plastic as wax, affording every man boundless opportunities of attaining to true nobility and dignity, by noble conflict and strong en-



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deavor; affording even the weakest the opportunity of attaining, through Love, to the measure of the stature of the Man Jesus Christ.

"I do not leave out of sight the fact that none ever gain this height in this world—that few even so much as remotely approximate to it. I do not forget that most men never really come into possession of themselves here, but simply live in the instincts, thoughts, and temperament which are their inheritance—at most only dreaming at times.

"This does not alter the fact that each man *can* possess himself; nor does it affect the truth that the task of attaining to self-possession is the Heaven-assigned task for each, and *must* be accomplished before true Life is possible; though it renders untenable many widely received ideas concerning man and his future.

"This really is the sublime truth of Sonship which Jesus Christ enunciated—the life of willing, loving response with all his faculties, powers, and affections, to the will, purposes, and disposition of the Eternal, as man finds these displayed in the Universe. Then, and then only, do man and God join hands in a union of indissoluble friendship; and all the infinite treasures of the Universe, the treasures of boundless Truth, of perfect Light, of rapturous Love, are his, then, by right of Sonship.

"The fact that the world is only beginning to recognize this is no proof that it is not true. Many of life's secrets have thus been revealed and lost sight of again, the world not being at first ready to appropriate them. We are fortunate in living in an age when this truth is emerging from the mists

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of error and superstition, and, gaining possession of men's hearts, and manifesting itself in their lives. Doubtless all men will have to grasp it before they can really begin to live; and doubtless Heaven is still striving, and will continue to strive, to lead up to this blessedness all, whether they have passed away from this life or not. Only, Heaven is in no hurry, and thinks nothing of spending milleniums in perfecting her noblest work; nay, thinks nothing of spending millions of years in fitting one globe to be its temporary abode.

"And, after all, what better plan than this, of allowing both good and bad qualities to be transmitted from generation to generation, could Heaven have adopted? To send every soul perfect into the world, or, in other words, to furnish every personality with a perfect constitution, or stock-in-trade, would have involved a new creation whenever a child was born. And with no results; for every personality, whether robed in a perfect or in an imperfect form, is bound to find out the use and value of its various faculties by *experience*; and (so far as we can judge from observation of facts), only learns to use them aright after repeated failures. A perfectly correct use of them at once annihilates personality; leaving no room for the exercise of *choice*. So that the personality which used instinctively, and with perfect correctness, the powers with which he found himself endowed, the first time he had an opportunity of exercising them (as the newly hatched chicken with unerring aim pecks the fly which hovers before it), would indeed be "sinless," but bereft of the highest and the peculiar

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glories of humanity. Thus we see that the gift to man of a sinless constitution to start with, would be no boon; since 'fall' he must before he can rise. Hence the state in which we find ourselves when we wake in life—the state of possessing an inharmoonious constitution—is really nearer to true manhood than the 'sinless' state in which it is popularly supposed that our first parents were when first created.

"Personality, immediately it is conditioned, must learn by experience what the conditions are, and the right use of them. We cannot conceive of the results of experience being gained without experience. Nor can we conceive of a personal action forestalling the results of the knowledge which only experience gives, and proceeding with calm, unhesitating step into the vast unknown in the midst of which it finds itself. Moreover, *Natura non facit saltus*. She never allows any breach of continuity, such as would occur if there were no such thing as heredity. The plan of creation is not disjointed; it moves along continuous lines; and let us, with our partial knowledge, doubt as much as we may, and hesitate to pronounce it good, it moves on unhesitatingly; and who are we to lift up our voices against the ways of the Eternal, before we have even begun to understand them?

"The imperfection is being worked out. Evil is self-destructive, but the beneficial results of experience abide. We can hope with a confident hope even for those who through the abuse of their powers, or the misuse or neglect of them, have not gained what, through life's experience, they should

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have gained; and have built for themselves a prison, instead of a temple opening on the infinite heavens. Surely these spirits in prison shall be visited by that Love which orbéd itself into form in the Man Christ Jesus; and through its power, gain strength and burst the prison doors, and walk out into the free, eternal Life of God."

It is abundantly plain from the above extract that my friend did not agree with many of the ideas concerning the position, the responsibility, and the destiny of man which, at the time when he wrote (the reader will rememember that these are his earlier notes, and were written many years ago), were almost universally accepted. He regarded the past history of the race without dismay, and he looked upon the future with unbounded hope. One or two further extracts from his manuscripts will perhaps show this more plainly.

"You cannot" (I find this written upon the back of an envelope, the post-mark upon which has enabled me to determine its date)—"by any rightful use of language, say that a child has 'fallen,' when, in the process of 'rounding to a separate mind,' it finds itself possessed of hitherto unsuspected desires, passions, and powers; and, in the endeavor to satisfy them, loses that innocence and simplicity which constitute the charm of childhood. The human race at the present time is in the stage of adolescence, and exhibits a state of great confusion through the imperfect understanding of, and mastery over, its powers; but it is a fatal error to consider this stage a lower one than that which preceded the recognition of the fact that it possessed these

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powers. It is a theory directly at variance with the facts of experience, to surmise that, but for 'the Fall' of our first parents, man would have been enabled to use these powers aright, without the aid of experience; and it is absurdity to make the individual responsible for the inherited effects of this 'fall,' before he even begins to understand, or to use as a free agent, the inharmonious constitution of which, in virtue of it, he finds himself possessed."

And again, in one of his note-books—

"I find myself possessed of certain tendencies which seem to be the results of the misuse of certain powers and instincts of my nature; not *my* misuse of them, but the over-indulgence of them, or disproportionate cultivation of them, by those who have formed previous links in the chain of existence of which I am the last.

"If sin be defined as 'any departure from the due and proportionate use of faculties of which a being, having the power of choice, endowed with faculties of various orders, and sustaining corresponding relations to the Universe, may be guilty,' I am willing to admit that these tendencies I find within me are due to the 'sins' of my ancestors, of which I bear the penalty. But it is quite a sufficient penalty for me to bear, to have to start my existence with these disadvantages, and work straight what has been made crooked, without charging on me the whole responsibility of having *created* these tendencies, and making me responsible for all imperfections in my actions and life which may result from them. The result of every misuse of faculties works out its due effect in life, and has to be

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borne (willingly or unwillingly) by some one. In the individual himself it results in an increased bias, and distortion of his nature; which is transmitted by the law of heredity to his descendants, and has to be righted by their painful endeavors, if it is righted at all.

"In society it has to be righted by pain, injustice, sorrow, or evil of some kind, being vicariously borne (willingly or unwillingly); borne when it is not merited—when the person or persons who bear it are quite innocent of the faults which produce it.

"This is the stern, unerring justice of the Universe, *and there is no other*. When sins, errors, mistakes and failures have worked out their full effects in life, what more can the sternest justice require.

"In reality no more is required; it is only foolish man who, in his ignorance, has imagined that Heaven is not satisfied therewith; foolish man, who has constructed for himself a monster, whom he has placed over the universe and labeled 'God;' foolish man, who, with his dim insight and undeveloped faculties, has not yet been able to discern the glorious truth, that the heart of the Universe is not revenge, or even justice merely, but boundless Love, which all the time bears us in its arms, and patiently strives to lift us into its own rapturous life—into the sweet consciousness of its loving embrace;—patiently strives, but also patiently waits, knowing that the end is sure and the means perfect; only seeming otherwise, to the objects of its tender care, because they are not yet able to comprehend the purposes of boundless benevolence



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which are steadily marching to accomplishment through the seeming confusion, but, in reality, perfect order of the Universe!"

The following also is in keeping with the ideas expressed in the previous notes:—

"Granting that man as a conditioned personality is finding out by experience how to adjust himself to his environment, and granting that he has accomplished a partial adjustment, is it possible to admit that the *individual* in every case shares in the advantage which the race has thus gained?

"I think it is. In spite of all the dark truths of heredity, there is a continuous elevation of the platform from which human life springs into existence. Every advance of the race, consequent on appropriating the wisdom gained by experience, is shared in by all the individuals who compose it. In all cases they have a better start than if they began at the beginning.

"This is the bright side of the truth of heredity. We inherit the beneficent results of experience, as well as the evil ones; and the start which any individual makes, at any period of the world's history, in consequence of inheriting both these, is a better one, I feel certain (however much he may be handicapped by *bad* inherited traits), than the one he would make if he were launched innocent, but inexperienced, into life. That is to say, the accumulated experience in the use of his powers, which any man inherits, more than counterbalances (even in the worst cases) the disadvantages under which he labors owing to the possession of a

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warped constitution, the result of the vices and mistakes of his progenitors.

"And the difficulties he experiences, and the pains and woes he has to endure before he can right the inherited bias of his nature, are not so great as the difficulties, pains, and woes he would have encountered in arriving at the experience from which now he starts.

"Thus the world's pangs are not in vain. An 'increasing purpose' runs through the ages; and every dearly bought experience is worth the price paid for it, and blesses all the future of humanity.

"But after all, these are simply speculations; and I do not see that much good can come from speculating concerning what might have been, or in hazarding conjectures about things which we do not know, and are not likely to know—at least just yet. The ways of the Eternal need no vindication, and if they did, we have not the knowledge or the power wherewith to vindicate them. I fully believe that the facts of human life, as we see them around us, and as we find them in history, all point to development as a fundamental peculiarity of the system of things in which we find ourselves, and of which we form a part—a development which, with regard to man, holds good for the whole of his environment; and can be traced in his relations with the world of mind and the world of spirit, no less than in his relations with the material world. But seeing that we know so little as yet concerning the previous stages of this development; and absolutely nothing with regard to how man became possessed of per-



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sonality, it is best, I think, simply to acknowledge our ignorance, and to content ourselves with a recognition of such facts as can be clearly established. Let us leave the past and the future. We stand in the present; to live now is our sole concern.

"We find ourselves in the links of a vast chain, which stretches, we know, far back into the past, and will be continued, we feel sure, on into the unknown future. What the first links were we do not know; what the last will be we can only dimly guess.

"The theories to account for the first which previous generations have constructed will, in all probability, have to be largely modified, if not altogether rejected, as the world's experience widens, and she learns better to read the open Book of Life; our guesses at the last must continually be hazarded afresh, as humanity grows to manhood, and appropriates more and more of this infinite Universe which is his birthright.

"But meanwhile *we are*, and the Universe is; here are two indubitable facts of infinitely more importance than any speculations concerning the past or the future.

"We are afloat on the great ocean of existence, on whose bosom we find ourselves upborne by craft not of our own making, not of our own choosing—often far otherwise—bequeathed to us by those who before us have sailed across the unknown sea. To wreck them is madness, to refuse to steer them is folly, to waste time in regretting their imperfect construction is vain. Let us take the helm as best we may, set the imperfect sails, stop the leaks, pump

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out the bilge, and then, by careful steering and the help of such charts as have been left us by previous voyagers, and such cries of warning and encouragement as those who sail with us may send to us across the waters, do our best to reach the unknown land ahead.

"We can do no more. The rest we must leave in the hands of Him who launched us on the sea, and who waits to receive us on the further shore; of whom, indeed, many and contradictory records have been left by those who went before, but none confirming so completely our dearest wishes and fondest hopes, none meeting so adequately our deepest needs, none telling so convincingly of successful voyages—of storms so bravely weathered, and dangers so triumphantly overcome, of such calm seas, moreover, and such glorious skies—as those which confidently assert that He is Good."

The above extracts will give the reader some idea of the drift of my friend's thoughts with regard to the human race, and the position of the individual in it. He will find many developments and unfoldings of them in the succeeding chapters, and, therefore, I have not thought it worth while to do more in this one than to give such as show the direction in which his thinking tended.

One or two further notes, in which are expressed his views regarding the rise of the scientific spirit, and possible development along her lines, will, however, form a not unfitting close to the chapter.

"The fact that it was not till the last hundred years or so that men set themselves seriously and soberly to study Nature as she presents herself to

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them, is a strange—at first sight, a startling—one, and must have important meanings. Before that, men fed their minds with imaginations, and conceived of the most fantastic travesties of Nature, the Universe, and Life, never dreaming of quietly setting to work to read them as they are.

“Endeavor to realize the importance of this fact.

“Man has been on this planet for thousands of years, and only within the last hundred years or so has he seriously devoted his powers to the study of its phenomena.

“Before that (with a few brilliant exceptions), most of the intellectual power of the race was misdirected, occupied on unprofitable mental problems, in the endeavor to work out the details of unverified preconceptions, and in logomachy.

“What can this mean but that the scale on which humanity has been framed is much vaster than has hitherto been imagined; that the human race, far from having passed its meridian, has hardly yet shaken itself free from the mists of dawn?

“It also lends increasing probability to the hypothesis, which, on many other grounds, seems to be a reasonable one, that man’s spiritual nature is as yet almost wholly undeveloped, and at present is, relatively, in the same position with regard to its environment, as that in which the mind was before the rise of the scientific spirit.

“The spiritual faculties of men are undoubtedly the highest which he possesses; they are the latest to develop; and we know that, in the case of individuals, they take incalculably the longest time to train and get into full action. It is exceedingly

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probable that what is true of the individual is true also of the race—that the full development of these faculties has yet to take place, and that the full control which they should exercise over human life has yet to be won.

“At present, certainly, they seem to cause man incalculably more pain and unrest than joy and delight—a state of things which is only possible when the right use of faculties is not understood, and the correspondence between them and their environment is incomplete.

“They have not yet settled down to their proper work; man’s being has not yet been harmonized and reduced to order by allowing these their proper place and influence; and the life which through these he can gain has not yet been gained. What new meanings the Universe will display to him when these are fully developed and rightly used, we can hardly dream of now, though the life of Jesus Christ may afford us some hints.”

I find in another place a somewhat similar thought.

“What a tremendous waste of mental energy there has been in the world (waste, that is, in so far as it was productive of any objective good; the subjective good it is impossible to estimate), owing to men directing their attention to pursuits (such as astrology, the search for the philosopher’s stone, etc.) whose importance was *imaginary*, founded on baseless fancies, not *real*!

“Their premises were wrong; they were not fixed in reality, but in the dreams of the imagination, and consequently all their deductions were worthless.

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"It may be that the mind was in training all this time, strengthening itself for the task of successfully grappling with and co-ordinating the facts of the Universe. If so, the apprenticeship was a long one, and we should be prepared for great results when it is over, and the mind settles down to the study of realities.

"If I read the history of the last hundred years aright, it means that this is what the mind has begun to do. The rise of the scientific spirit seems to me to mean that the mind has got out of its apprenticeship, and is settling down to its real work, and will never again in the future misdirect its powers as it has done in the past.

"What the result will be of any considerable number of the race using the mind aright to discern truth and master the secrets of Nature, the history of Science since its dawn hints at. But only hints at. There is no end to the mastery which the mind may gain over Nature; there is no end to Truth. This is what makes the history of the nineteenth century so unique, so pregnant with meaning. A new era has dawned; already the results have been marvellous. Of what they are the promise and the potency, who can tell?"

And again—

"We are, I believe, at the dawn of a new era. The mind has set itself to the task of reading the physical world, and has discerned simplicity, order, and law behind the complexity and the seeming confusion and disorder which appear to the senses. It seems, indeed, almost to have arrived at the most ultimate generalizations of which it is capable. It

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has found that all phenomena are manifestations of an unknown Power, and has discovered that these manifestations, though apparently infinitely various, are reducible to simplicity under a few universal laws. Further than that it declares it cannot go. It acknowledges that it is entirely ignorant of the nature of this Power; it even declares that it is impossible to know It. And it is right—that is to say, it is impossible for Science to know the Universe as anything else but Power. But human nature is endowed with other faculties besides mind, and the Universe presents other phenomena than merely physical ones, or, I should say, is more than phenomenal. There are moral and spiritual powers in man, and moral and spiritual facts in the Universe. These powers man has never hitherto (with a few exceptions), to any considerable extent, cultivated, nor *scientifically applied* to the solution of the problems which offer themselves in the Universe as we find it.

“When they, in alliance with the mental faculties, are brought to bear on Truth, I do not despair of humanity finding that there is order, and law, and rightness behind the (phenomenal) confusion of the moral world; that it seems to us confused and wrong because we only see it *as it seems*, not *as it is*; that it is the varied manifestations of a Moral Power regulated by universal moral laws. Nay, further, I do not despair of humanity’s discerning that this Moral Power is the same as that which the mind has discovered to be Physical Power, or Force; it only appearing double to man’s twofold powers; and I even dare to hope that all phenomena



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of the Universe, of which man with all the varied powers of his nature can take cognizance, may be resolved into, and may be *known to be*, the manifestations of an all-embracing spiritual unity—Love.

“Then will Nature be seen full of new meanings, and life will be a perfect joy. Then will be seen that it was not the Universe which was wrong and confused, but we who were blind and wilful. Then nothing will prevent us from reading infinite perfection in every line and every thought which it contains. Every smallest flower, every tiniest insect, every drop of water and grain of sand, shall be seen to be the manifestation of that Spiritual Fact; every sternest law and darkest evil shall resolve itself into the same; the whole Universe shall be seen to be good, a perfect poem, a perfect symphony, vibrating ever to one key-note—the key-note of Love.”

Thus did my friend regard the present, and thus did he look forward to the future. And viewing the world and man thus, it seems no longer surprising that he could write—

“Who are we, that we should be in such a hurry to arrive at the consummation for which our hearts long—the ‘divine event’ to which creation is surely, with unwavering steps, progressing?

“To march with patience in line with that steady advance is our duty now and here; and because our duty, therefore the best for us.

“In other ages, when we have attained to other things, our lives, and the life of creation around us, may move with a calmer, a less turbulent and chaotic flow than now, or we may attain to the revelation

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that the chaos is in us—is seeming, and not real. But surely now, *this* and no other is best for us; best, at any rate, if we steadfastly steer our course by those (as yet) weak but still undoubtedly most godlike promptings and aspirations which we find within us; to strengthen and develop which is assuredly man's one task amid these shows and delusions of time."



## CHAPTER III

### LIFE

“‘LIFE is the correspondence of faculties with environment,’ says our latest philosophy. Yes, but *what* faculties and with *what* environment? Are the faculties all of the same order, or are there different ranks of them? Do they ‘correspond’ simply with the visible? or are there some capable of correspondence with the Invisible Universe? Are they all capable of the same fulness of Life? or do their capacities or potentialities vary? Are all men equally conscious of possessing them? or do some of them lie dormant in some natures, rendering possible unknown and unsuspected developments?

“All these questions require to be carefully considered by any one who would attempt an explication of Life on the basis of the above scientific definition; and in order to answer them, appeal must be made, not only to the consciousness of the individual, but also to the consciousness of the race. It must be ascertained not only what faculties *we* are conscious of, and with what environment *we* correspond, but also whether the consciousness of any of our fellow-men has ever transcended our own—whether they have corresponded with any environment which we have never known.

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"A scientific examination of Life from this point of view has not yet been attempted; but it will have to be investigated in this light before any reconciliation can be accomplished between the new Truth which the present age has discovered, and the old Truth which has been in the possession of the world for centuries.

"And let not those who cling to the old truths cling too tenaciously to the forms which enshrine them. Let them not fear that in surrendering the forms, and clothing them in new ones which better suit the requirements of modern thought, they are in any danger of losing the truths themselves.

"Truth can always take care of herself; she is not particular about the clothes she wears. If they do not adequately drape her, so much the worse for the clothes. Their insufficiency will soon become manifest, and men, who never allow Truth to go long undraped, will consign them to the rag-shop, and deck her out anew in a more fitting garb."

The above extract strikes the key-note of all my friend's thinking on the subject of Life, and will enable the reader to understand the drift of his thought, not only in this chapter, but also in the subsequent ones.

Accepting the definition of Life above quoted, as the *terminus a quo* of his investigation, he endeavored, by a careful consideration of the questions he here propounds, to ascertain the *ad quem*.

The reader will have ample opportunities of acquainting himself with his maturest conclusions on the subject before he closes the book. Mean-

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while, in accordance with my plan, I will give first such extracts from the manuscripts as seem best to express the earlier stages of the development of his thinking.

“True Life needs no justification: it justifies itself by the delight which ever accompanies it.

“If the experience of any individual does not endorse this truth, it must be owing to the failure of such a one to understand, and get into harmony with, the conditions of his existence; not to anything wrong in those conditions, nor to any inherent inability on his part (I mean any insuperable, unalterable inability), either from excess or defect of functions, to adjust himself to those conditions, and to correspond with his environment. I cannot conceive of Life being created without there being the means of satisfying its requirements. I cannot think it possible for the Universe to beget functions in living beings for which there is no corresponding environment. Even granting that this is possible, those functions for which no permanent satisfaction existed would soon perish for want of support, and only such would remain as the Universe contained adequate means of satisfying.

“But though I cannot conceive of functions existing without a sphere in which they can support and satisfy themselves, I can conceive of an organism possessing functions which have not yet been fully developed, and which have not yet entered into full correspondence with their proper sphere,—an organism which consequently does not possess that fulness of life which is possible to it.

“Man at present seems to me to be in this con-

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dition, and consequently to be in a state of unrest and dissatisfaction,—a state in which he must continue until he has either brought all his faculties into full correspondence with their proper environment (or, at least, has effected a satisfactory correspondence between those faculties of his which are most fundamental, and the environment of which, in virtue of the possession of these, he is conscious); or, by long disuse, has permitted some to shrivel up, and his life to become adjusted to such environment as he, with the faculties he continues to exercise, can correspond with. In this case he will become dead to all such environment as his disused faculties could make him acquainted with; and if it possible to *kill* faculties by disuse, he will, of course, by this means contract the range of his being; and, if they are his nobler faculties which he thus kills by disuse, sink permanently in the scale of existence.

“I do not think that experience gives us a clear and decided answer to the question as to whether this is possible in the case of man’s higher faculties. I am inclined to think that it is not. Man seems to have almost boundless power to misuse his faculties; but there is no clear indication that, by the persistent neglect to use them, the possibilities of life which are his birthright can be permanently reduced.

“Temporarily, no doubt, they can be; but there always remain warnings and indications that he has not fulfilled his possibilities, and I do not see any sure indication that the power of self-annihilation (either by the misuse or the neglect of his

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faculties) has been placed within man's reach. The limits of freedom are arrived at long before that becomes possible.

"No wilfulness can for ever deprive of us of *all* life, though it may long detain us from entering into the full possession of it.

"That even this is possible is only owing to the height in the scale of existence at which we have been placed—the fulness of life to which we can attain.

"For we have personality, *i. e.* self-consciousness, and freedom, and by how much the possession of these places us higher in the scale of being than the organisms which do not possess them, or only that shadow of them which we find among the lower animals, by that much is the joy and delight in living (*i.e.* in willingly adjusting our faculties to, and consciously corresponding with, our environment) superior to the joy and delight of an unconscious and instinctive adjustment and correspondence; to say nothing of the fact that the possession of these peculiarly human characteristics makes us conscious of a new environment, by correspondence with which new and immeasurable heights of life can be gained.

"But whenever, and to the extent to which, a conscious and willing correspondence is possible, then and to that extent must a conscious and willing departure from it, and neglect of it, be possible also. Only, as I have said, I cannot see any indication that the possibilities in this direction extend to the power to *kill* faculties by disuse, and permanently contract the range of the organism. The

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greatest deadness of our faculties to environment, however much it may lower us to the level of the brutes, can never destroy the possibilities of manhood within us. At least we *believe* not, and therefore continue to hope even for the most degraded of mankind; we hardly know enough about life to *know*.

“More especially does it seem impossible for us to deaden ourselves altogether to that environment with which we become acquainted through the possession of those distinctive characteristics of humanity which I have just mentioned—self-consciousness and self-determination. It is in virtue of these that we recognize the existence of the Great Personality—recognize that the Universe can sustain relations with us, such as we are only conscious of in our relations with one another, not with material things. The universal prevalence of religion shows that man has never altogether lost touch with this environment, though the very various relations which he has sustained to it, and the various feelings with which he has regarded it (ranging from fear and hate to trust and love), show what infinite degrees of life are possible to him with regard to that environment, and show also what woe or bliss may accompany them.

“The question of life, indeed, for man, resolves itself into a question of the relations he sustains to this environment,—to the Central Life of the Universe. His personality can only find a fitting environment in a Personality; all questions as to the correspondence of the conditions which limit his personality (*i. e.* his constitution, physical and

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mental) with the Universe, as it appears to him thus conditioned, being of secondary importance to the question: What attitude he should adopt to the Personality of which his own personality makes him conscious? For all minor correspondences must adjust themselves satisfactorily, if the great correspondence of personality with Personality is rightly established; the harmonizing influence of this central correspondence will then make itself felt through all the relations which his personality, owing to the peculiarities of his conditioning, may sustain to the Universe. Hence, to find out what, the Personal Characteristics of the Universe are, and the laws of its relations to other personalities, must ever be for man the question of questions; for these are fundamental, these are eternal; and boundless, endless Life—Life which can never fail, with its unfailing accompaniments of joy and delight, must ever result from man's correspondence with this Eternal Environment."

The following develops in somewhat less abstract form the ideas contained in the above:—

"There are three orders or planes of existence within our reach, with all three of which it has been ordained that we shall have relations.

"The quality of our life depends upon our choice of these. Live in them all three we must, but it rests with ourselves which of them we live *for*. They are—the Sense Order, the Mind Order, and the Spirit Order.

"The first of these is the order or plane, in which we find ourselves when we are first launched into existence. It is the only environment of which we



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are at first conscious, and our whole attention is occupied in receiving, and adjusting ourselves to, the impressions which through our senses it conveys to us.

“This is the lowest order, and if our development is normal, it speedily fails entirely to satisfy us, owing to the rise within us of faculties of a different order, which are not content simply to receive impressions and observe phenomena, but crave to understand their meaning. Nevertheless, such infinite variety, and such opportunities of gaining pleasure, does the Sense Order present, that the majority of men continue to live in it and for it, even when higher faculties than those which are properly satisfied by it arise within them. They never get beyond the delusions of the senses; they think that the Sense Order contains sufficient wealth to permanently satisfy them. They do not seek to understand it; they simply seek to sate themselves with the pleasure which correspondence with it affords. For this purpose they too frequently prostitute their higher powers,—not using them legitimately, in order to master the Sense Order, and read it as the manifestations of Mind, but in order to multiply and intensify the delights which it ministers to the senses. For a time this succeeds, but only for a time. It is impossible for these higher faculties permanently to satisfy themselves in this way, and it is impossible for the senses long to respond to such illegitimate demands upon their powers. If strained beyond a certain point, they refuse to yield any pleasure at all, and even when this extreme point is not reached, a

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sense of unrest and dissatisfaction must continually accompany the attempt to satisfy with one environment a being endowed with faculties framed to correspond with more than one.

"The Mind Order ranks next to the Sense Order. It is the plane of existence which lies halfway between the Sense Order and the Spirit Order.

"The man who lives in it and for it sees that the Sense Order is not real. He sees that it is only the temporary form of Something which is not it, but which takes this form to that part of his constitution which requires an environment of this kind. But what that Something *is*, the man who has advanced no further than the Mind Order can never know. He can define it no further than as Power or Force; he can know *about* it, but he cannot know *It*.

"He is this much better off than the man who is living for the Sense Order, in that he looks upon this whirl of things which we call the Material World, and knows that it is a drama, though the interpretation thereof he cannot discover; whereas the man living for the Sense Order believes that the play is real. The watching of the play, and the using of his powers to trace the simple means by which such an infinite variety of effects is produced, may long seem to him sufficient to afford him permanent and satisfying delight. But he is bound to find out, sooner or later, that his whole being cannot be satisfied in this way; that there is another order with which he can have relations; and that no lasting satisfaction can be gained till

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his relations with this order are properly established. I do not say that he always finds this out in the short span of life which he lives here. Often he seems to have but a very feeble consciousness of this highest environment; and often he rests contented with a very imperfect correspondence with it. But he is bound, sooner or later, to find out that he cannot gain full satisfaction for every part of his nature unless he enters into correspondence with this environment; nay, that such a correspondence is of primary importance, and that, till it is made, all the satisfaction which he derives from the correspondence of the other parts of his nature with their fit environment, will be poisoned by a continuous sense of dissatisfaction and unrest.

“This third order, or plane of existence, is the Spirit Order. From the standpoint of this order, a man can not only see the play of life, but *read* it. Entering this order, he enters on the Real—he comes face to face with Eternal Things. Then he no longer knows about, but he lives in realities. Between this and the Mind Order there is all the difference which there is between the knowledge and experience of a man who has visited foreign lands, and seen them for himself, and established relations with them, and the man who has only heard about them. The meaning of the play, of life, of Nature, is plain to him; or rather *some* of the meanings; for there are infinite meanings which only eternity can exhaust. He sees Truth. The Eternal Reality orbs itself continually vaster, out of all the flux of things; and linking himself

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into harmony with it, he lives more and more the Eternal Life, which the accidents of time cannot harm nor diminish.

“The Spirit Order can only become a reality to us when we exercise that part of our nature which is fitted to correspond with it—exercise it in accordance with the laws which eternally and unalterably express the relations which we and it can mutually sustain.

“Man has had a by no means indistinct or imperfect knowledge of these laws, even from the earliest times, and they are now all summed up and unified in the Christian law of Love.

“Though known, however, they are not, by the majority of men, obeyed; and the world as yet knows little of the life of correspondence with the Spirit Order,—of its supreme worth and satisfying sweetness.

“The consequences of living in one or other of these three orders—that is to say, of making choice of one or the other, ‘setting our affections’ on it, (for, as I have said, we are bound by our constitution to have relations with all three)—follow naturally on the nature of each.

“Living for the senses, a man gets what pleasure and enjoyment the senses can give; but he inevitably finds, sooner or later, that this is only limited, and ‘wears with time,’ and cannot satisfy the Infinite within him. It is the Infinite trying to satisfy itself with the finite,\* and the result is

\*The reader will doubtless remember a very similar statement of Teufelsdröckh: “Man’s unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his greatness; it is because there is an

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certain. The poor overworked body speedily refuses to respond to the demands which the spirit makes upon it; and the hungry spirit looks eagerly round for new sensations with which to ward off satiety. That is the reason why lust in extreme cases merges into cruelty; it is the last effort of man's spirit to satisfy itself with the finite.

"The pleasures to be derived from the intellect are greater far, and less gross than those to be derived from the senses, nor are they so easily exhausted; but here again the spectacle is presented of man's spirit trying to satisfy itself with what cannot satisfy it, and the inevitable results sooner or later appear—dissatisfaction and satiety. The intellect soon dashes itself against the iron walls which enclose it; it cries for answers to questions to which, for it, no answers are possible. Not all the accumulated stores of wisdom and knowledge which the world holds, and all the as yet unexhausted truths of Nature and Life which the mind can grasp, can satisfy the spirit's cravings, and give it rest and peace.

"It is by entering the Spirit Order, and by setting its affections on it, that the spirit of man can alone gain the rest, and peace, and satisfaction for which it craves, and which it so vainly seeks to find in the Sense Order, or the Mind Order. It is in that direction alone that man's nature opens on the infinite, and can find room for that bound-

Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the finite."—"Sartor Resartus," p. 131 (People's Edition).

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less expansion which it desires. Truth, Holiness, and Love, the realities of the Spirit Order, are as infinite as man's capacity for them; and infinite is the satisfaction which they give the spirit that lives for them and in them. Thus to live is to live the true life, the Eternal Life, the Life of the Eternal and Infinite Spirit."

To this I find appended the following note:—

"The foregoing considerations suggest, among other things, the uselessness of any demonstrations of the supreme worth of the Spirit Order to those who are living in the other two, *except by life*. To convince them, you must *live* the Eternal Life. No demonstrations of the folly of living for the Sense Order are of any avail in inducing those who are living in and for it to live a higher life, unless you can make them discontented with their present life by showing that you have something well worth having, which they have not; a peace, a joy, a strength, a light, which they would fain possess, but which they know well their present life cannot give them.

"No intellectual proofs will satisfy the man who is living for the Mind Order that the Spirit Order is a higher and worthier one, unless he sees that you have satisfaction where he has dissatisfaction, see light where he cannot pierce the darkness, and read Love where he only reads Law. The world can only be lifted into the Spirit Order by beholding, and being stimulated by the sight of, the fulness of Life which those who live in and for it possess; only thus can its supreme beauty and its infinite worth be brought home to



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the world's heart with convincing power. What one man could do for the elevation of the race by living that life, the history of Christianity shows. Would that those who call themselves by His Name more closely followed in His steps!"

Very similar to the above is the following:—

"The central and commanding point of the universe—the point from which we can get a bird's-eye view of the whole, and see it in all its relations—is everywhere. We stand now at the centre; we have as many opportunities now of becoming acquainted with its deepest meanings as ever we shall have.

"Not that the use we make of our present opportunities will not enable us to enter into larger life, and so penetrate deeper into the truth of things; but what I mean is that the opportunity for doing this we now possess, and that only by making use of it can larger Life, with its consequent wider touch on that which environs us, be gained.

"No change of place, no change of body, will be of any use to us, if in this place we do not make use of the opportunities it presents, and with this body do not use the power it places at our disposal of winning Life.

"A man sees what he has the eyes to see; the quality of Life he possesses is exactly proportionate to the faculties which he exercises most; he lives in a world of his own making, for the Great All takes shape to him in forms which are constructed by his various faculties, and only mirrors Itself in such ways as these faculties possess the power to construct.



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“But inasmuch as the material world is simply the transitory form which the spiritual takes, and all Reality is spiritual, the Spiritual Life is the highest, and the only true Life; and only the man who lives that Life can truly be said to live, because he has Life then of the same quality as the Central Life of the Universe—is ‘one’ with it, and possesses the key to all its infinite meanings. But it does not seem possible to lift men into this Life unless they are discontented with the quality of the life they at present possess. That discontent is bound to come sooner or later; for man, with the nature with which he has been endowed, cannot remain contented with anything less than the Spiritual Life,—that is to say, not permanently, though for a time he may. It would have been no use trying to persuade the Prodigal to return home again before his substance was wasted. There are many men in this condition. They are in such a state of contentment with the life they are living that they do not feel the need for anything better. As long as they remain thus it is useless to try and lift them up to higher Life; they must be left to their ‘paddock’ life,\* till calamity, or pain, or death shakes them out of their contentment, and awakens them to the fact that they are poor, and blind, and naked in the universe.”

The following indicated his position from a more personal standpoint:—

\*An allusion, evidently, to Browning's lines —

“Left in God's contempt apart,

Tame in earth's paddock as her prize.”

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"I have within me not only animal requirements, which crave for satisfaction, and find it in the material environment in which I am placed; not only mental functions, which find a fitting environment in the manifestations of Mind into which, by their means, all material phenomena are resolvable; but also a heart, with spiritual affections and cravings which no amount of pleasure derived from the gratification of my physical or mental requirements can satisfy. I have found that there is an environment to match this part of my nature, as well as environments for the other parts.

"I have found that That which works in and through the phenomena of the physical world, and of receptiveness which will alone allow it freely to behind its laws, and by their means meets the requirements of my physical and mental constitution, will make Itself felt no less satisfyingly to my spiritual nature, if I do but adopt that attitude communicate with my spirit.

"I have found that it will reward a thousandfold all efforts to get into harmony with it. To establish this harmony—to conform to the laws of this Spiritual Environment, and to correspond with it—I have found to be increasingly possible, and increasingly delightful: and my conviction has been continually confirmed that it possesses in boundless perfection the quality of *Love*, into which all its laws are resolvable, and by which all its manifestations in the universe are unswervingly regulated."

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And again—

“Nothing surprises me more than the tremendous force with which our feeblest efforts in the direction of the Right and the True are supplemented in Life, and made to produce results out of all proportion to our endeavors. Do but throw yourself into the flow of the great tide of the Universe which is ever sweeping on to spiritual ends, and in spite of all mistakes, arising from an imperfect knowledge and understanding of the great world in which we find ourselves; in spite of frequent misunderstanding of the beneficent purposes which the Eternal is working out for us, through us, and in us;—in spite of all these, the man who keeps in his heart the determination to find out the Truth and to do the Right, will surely find himself swept by the beneficent forces of the Universe into heights of joy and peace too awful to be named in speech; he will find himself able to read the world and Life with the accuracy of clearest vision; he will find himself absolved from all care and anxiety about the future; he will feel at rest—secure from all evil, and perfectly sure of all Good—in the Bosom of the Infinite Benevolence which surrounds him:—which he continually learns better to know, and more completely to trust, as, by all the experiences of time, he is wrapped more completely in its strong embrace.”

It will be seen from the above extracts that my friend held, not only that a spiritual life—a “correspondence” with a “Spiritual Environment,” a “life in a Spirit Order”—was possible, but that it is pos-

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sible *now*. A few of his thoughts on this point may be fitly inserted here.

He writes in one of his note-books—

“Heaven in all its beauty, and hell in all its blackness, are around us now; there is no need to relegate them to the future.

“Here and now there are infinite riches of Truth within our power to grasp; sweetest visions of Good to be seen; heavenliest raptures of joy and bliss to be enjoyed. Oh, the pity of it that most men so completely miss them!

“To the seeing eye earth is full of heaven—earth *is* heaven, flooded with all the glories of the Eternal Light. The pure and loving heart needs not the change of death to enable it to look on the face of the Eternal; here and now does it stand in His presence; here and now is it thrilled with the sweet consciousness of His changeless Love.

“To realize this truth is to begin to live—it is to enter upon that endless Life which the accidents of time cannot affect, and which death cannot change, because it is the Life of the changeless Eternal Spirit.”

And again—

“There is no other heaven beyond that which, by a wise and right use of our powers, we can enter into now; there is no other hell beyond that in which we find ourselves, when we have misused or neglected them.

“I do not say that the change of death will make no difference—that it may not relieve the upward-soaring soul of some weights which have hindered its ascent, and may not make the soul that

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has been grovelling amidst earthly things more conscious of its debased condition; but it cannot give self-control to any spirit which has not won it on earth by noble strife; it cannot give eyes to any spirit wherewith to gaze on the Eternal Realities, if he has not in the present world used his powers of spiritual vision on the eternal things which are all around us now; it cannot make sensible to the touches of the Eternal Love any spirit which has not striven to get into tune with that key-note of love to which all Life and all creation is tuned.

"Heaven *is* self-control, and Light, and Love; and no possible change of place or of body can give us self-control, if we have not won it; or Light, if we have preferred to sit in darkness; or Love, if we have not cultivated that divinest instinct of our souls.

"Wherever our spirits may drift out of this 'ruined chrysalis'\* of our bodies, of this we may be sure—that he who is unrighteous will be unrighteous still, and he who is filthy will be filthy still, and he that is righteous and holy will be righteous and holy still—gravitating to his own place (which in no case need we suppose is a fixed and final one), whether high or low, in obedience to those unalterable laws of spiritual attraction and repulsion which regulate, even in this world, the quality of the Life which men possess."

And yet again—

"How foolish for men to imagine that at some future time, and under changed conditions with

\*Cf. "In Memoriam," lxxxii.

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regard to *externals*, they will be more favourably placed to gain life, and light, and joy, than they are at present; when these can only be attained to by internal changes, which are as possible, and as easy for us to effect, *now* as they ever will be! Here and now we have afforded us unnumbered opportunities for our spirits to grow and expand into larger and fuller life. Here and now there are innumerable lessons to be learned, enough to satisfy the most insatiable appetite for Truth; heavenliest visions of Life and Light to behold, if we will but look and see them. Such boundless opportunities does the present afford us of gaining all that is worth gaining; so completely does the Infinite Universe, with all its inexhaustible wealth, lie within our reach now,—that I cannot think of or imagine any place or condition more favourable. When we have satisfied ourselves with the beauty and splendour of the material world; when we have exhausted all its Truth and possessed ourselves of all its secrets; when we have fully learned all the lessons of self-control, of patience, and of love which we can learn here and now,—then may we cry out for other worlds, and demand new ideals towards which to strive. But not only is this at present impossible and unimaginable, but it will ever become more and more so as the expanding soul continually finds the present more full of inexhaustible Truth, and the place whereon it stands more fully bathed in the glories and vibrating with the pulses of the Life of the Eternal Spirit.”

And yet again—

“Depend upon it that those who see no Divinity



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in the present will see none in the future; that no new glories will burst on the eyes of him who is not finding the place whereon he now stands glorious. Men talk of the Eternal having appeared in distant lands to those who lived long ages ago; they do not know that, if they had stood beside them then, they would have seen no more of His glory than they can see now, by lifting up their eyes, and opening out their hearts to receive the present indications of His presence.

“To Moses, a bush in the desert was all aflame with the splendour of the Eternal; to Peter Bell—

‘A primrose by the river’s brim  
A yellow primrose was to him,  
And it was nothing more.’

Yet the Eternal was in the primrose as much as in the bush; the difference was in the *men*.

“A seer to-day will walk the earth as reverently as ever Moses did when, with unsandalled feet, he approached the burning bush, and will as plainly hear the voice of the Eternal speaking to his soul as *he* did three thousand years ago.

“The poverty is not in our surroundings; it is in ourselves. There are no deepest secrets of the Universe, no clearest visions of Truth, no most satisfying harmonies of Life and Love, which are not within our reach, even here and now. But poor, blind, foolish, wilful man will not grasp them as they lie before him in the present. He vainly looks forward to possessing, at some future time, and by some change of body or of locality, that which can only be possessed by change of soul. He vainly



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imagines that the Eternal elsewhere will afford him—can afford him—better opportunities for living than are now within his reach; he vainly supposes that in some other portion of His Universe He is more present, more clearly to be seen, and more satisfying to be enjoyed, than here.

“Man has within him now all power to rise to infinite, endless Life, but at present he does not use it; he has before him all the glories of the Eternal, but at present he does not see them. Thick veils of habit, of inherited ideas, of superstition and ignorance, hide them from him; strong fetters of uncontrolled or misused faculties, bind him down. Nevertheless, it still remains true that he possesses the power to rise to endless Life, and that he is surrounded by a Universe capable of supplying all his needs. This some men have known; this all men shall know.

“Some men there have been to whom earth has not been the dull, commonplace, dreary abode it is to most, but the very temple of the Living God; to whom Life has not been a weariness and a prolonged endurance, but a jewel of infinite worth, the possession of which inspires the soul with unfailing joy and delight. They have rent the veils which lay between their eyes and Truth; they have burst the bonds which have hindered them from soaring; they have pierced through the fleeting and transitory to the Changeless and Eternal. They have got themselves into tune with the pulsations of that Eternal Life, which for ever and ever endures, behind all the changes of its manifestations, in timeless, inexhaustible fulness; they have satisfied their

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utmost needs with its riches of Life, and Truth, and Love.

“What they have done—more especially what He has done, who saw to the very heart of the Universe, and found it Love; who fathomed the deepest depths of Life, and found them Joy; who had such oneness with the Great All that He dared to call Himself the Son of God;—what these have attained to, all may attain to. Yea, in spite of wilfulness and ignorance, all *shall* attain to this, piloted by the Great All-encircling Love, through doubt, and fear, and pain, and woe, and sin, up to the consciousness of its own infinite sweetness, up to the fulness of its own endless Life.”

It seems not inappropriate in this connection to insert a note which contains my friend's ideas with regard to the future life.

“I think that in all probability the first feeling we shall experience after we have undergone the change which we call death will be surprise that the next world is so much like this one. I cannot believe that there will be any breach of continuity between this life and the next—that the mere casting off of this envelope of flesh will enable us to see more than we have learned to see here. The Universe must appear to us in the next life grand or commonplace, vibrating with joy or filled with pain and sorrow—a temple of the Living Spirit or a charnel-house of the dead, according as we have learned to read it aright, or have abused and neglected the powers we possess of so reading it, in the present life. Depend upon it, we shall begin in the next world where we leave off in this. We

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cannot be nearer the Eternal than we are now; we cannot have better opportunities than we now possess of gaining Truth and entering into everlasting Life.

“And even if at death we were ushered into the nearer presence of the Infinite Spirit, in some place more filled with His glory than this place, think you we should be conscious of it, when now we are unconscious of a thousand indications of His Presence, and only catch sight of a fraction of that glory by which we are ever surrounded?

“And if, from these bodies of ours, our spirits passed into nobler frames, affording us a hundred times greater opportunities for corresponding with the Universe, and for mastering its secrets, think you they would benefit us, when we have not yet made full use of the powers we *have*, and consequently, should be bound either to neglect or misuse larger ones? The capacities of an angel would be of no use to us, except in so far as we had the angel’s power of using them. Ignorant of or unskilled in their use, to us they would be no boon—much the reverse.

“It is extremely probable, if not certain, that we actually carry about with us, and have in us now, that ‘body which shall be,’ and that death is simply the casting off of a worn-out husk, the shedding of which leaves us in all essentials as we were before, effecting no change either in us or in the appearance which the universe presents to us. The knowledge which we have gained of the cosmos and its laws seems to demand some such doctrine, to avoid the breach of continuity which would other-

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wise take place. Be that as it may, it is certain that to all the great and fundamental relations which we can sustain to the Universe, the change of death can make no difference. It cannot give us faith, if we have not gained it here; it cannot enable us to read Truth, if we have not endeavoured to read it here; it cannot fill our spirits with the joys of Love, if we have not tried to tune our hearts here to that key-note which is just as surely the note to which life here is tuned as it is anywhere in the boundless realms of space."

The reader will perceive, in the above extract, as well as in those which precede it, a tacit assumption that there *is* a future life.

This was with my friend a fixed conviction. That the change of death was simply a change, and not an annihilation of existence, he most firmly believed; in fact, he confesses that annihilation is inconceivable to him.

"Do you think it possible," he writes, "that the Eternal, having struck a soul into being, will ever be compelled to strike it out? I cannot believe so. He is not thus to be baulked in His purposes. I can imagine such a soul long existing in unrest and woe, through not having yet learned to live; but I cannot imagine the Eternal ever blotting it out of existence in despair of teaching it that lesson. The fact that, as far as we know, we were not, and now are, is no proof or argument that we in the future may (or shall) cease to be. We *are* now, and believing that the Power which brought us into existence is a *good* Power, and has created us for some good end, I cannot think it possible that He will be

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compelled to withdraw from existence one single soul which He has launched into it, or fail at last to lead it up to that eternal blessedness for which He has designed it. We *are*, and therefore we *must* be. The question is not whether we shall ever cease to be, but how long we shall remain blind to what true Life really is—how long we shall continue to miss its joy, and fall short of its fulness.

“That men may long continue in the outer darkness, *existing* rather than *living*, seems certain; we see so many instances of it here, that we cannot doubt that. But that the Eternal will ever be obliged to say of any soul, ‘This work of Mine is a failure; wishing it all good, it has yet succeeded in making itself utterly evil; I despair of redeeming it; let it cease to be;’—*that* I can never believe.”

In the last extract the reader will have observed that my friend draws a distinction between *existence* and *life*.

I insert here a note from one of his note-books which embodies his thought on this point.

“There is a vast difference between existence and life; *exist* we must, but it may be a long time before we begin to *live*. Existence we share in common with the brute creation, but the possibility of attaining to life is peculiar to humanity.

“This is owing to the fact that man alone possesses the power of consciously directing and controlling the faculties and instincts of his nature, and does not merely exercise them instinctively and automatically. He possesses the power to possess himself; which includes, not only the power to use as a free agent the capacities of body and mind by

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means of which he holds relations with the material universe, but also the limitless power of correspondence with that Spiritual Environment with which his personality makes him acquainted.

“But the possession of this power brings with it the consciousness of responsibility for the use he makes of it. For it makes him conscious of a Power in the universe of a similar kind to that which he possesses—a Power energizing in definite and constant ways, and requiring him to exert his power in similar ways. He is, I believe, directly conscious of this Power; the universal prevalence of moral distinctions—of conscience with its unswerving testimony to the rightness or wrongness of actions or motives—cannot be satisfactorily accounted for on any other hypothesis. But we have ample evidence that he has been only gradually arriving at true knowledge concerning its modes of action. I do not enter now into the question how this knowledge has been gained:—how far conscience is the product of experience; and how far the degree of enlightenment to which man has attained in moral distinctions is due to other causes.

“Whatever may be the truth in this respect, I think we may state it as a fact, universally acknowledged, to a greater or less extent, by the whole human race, that it is only in definite modes that man can rightly exercise this power of self-determination which he possesses. There is a definite order in the Universe to which he must adjust himself, if he would avoid conflict with it.

“This being so, we may define Life (as contrasted with existence) to be, the free and full exercise of



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all man's faculties and powers in harmony with the consciously recognized modes to which the Universe conforms (using the word 'Universe' in the widest sense, to include the Power of which man, in virtue of the possession of personality, is conscious).

"Life in this perfect fulness no man possesses; but still there is a vast difference between even the most imperfect recognition of this as the end to be aimed at, and the most distant approximation to it; and the life which does not recognize such an end at all; which makes no attempt at self-possession and self-determination in harmony with the flow of the Universe, but simply exists in the instincts, habits, and prepossessions which heredity has entailed on it, or into which it has drifted by the joint operation of external circumstances and unregulated volitions.

"This latter kind of life is what I mean by existence. It is without that conscious power over itself, the possession of which constitutes one of the peculiar glories of humanity; it is without that conscious conformity to the modes in which the Universe works to which man alone is permitted to attain. It never really possesses itself; it never lifts its head above the crowd of instincts, and conceptions, and peculiarities of constitution, in which it is immersed; it is influenced in all its actions by motives suggested by the unregulated play of its powers; it acts on the impulses of uncontrolled and unbalanced faculties, and is driven by them, instead of guiding them in the strength of conscious power over them.

"There is, however, an intermediate state between the state of existence and that of life, and it



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is in that intermediate state that we at present find the majority of men. For men inherit, along with other peculiarities of constitution, a more or less clear intimation of the ways in which they ought to act—the result of the previous experience of the race with regard to the modes in which the Universe acts,\* embodied in conscience; and they also receive in their early years further impressions of this nature from those with whom they come in contact, amounting, as a rule (though to this there are many exceptions), to the general idea of the age concerning the right and proper way in which to act, in consequence of what the Universe is conceived to be. In other words, men inherit and get implanted in them in their early years certain ideas with regard to morality; what they gain in the latter way, speaking broadly, being the ideas of the age in which they live, the former being the ideal of action produced by the previous knowledge and experience of the race (or that portion of it which constituted their ancestry) concerning the nature and character of the Eternal. There are not a few men who speedily shake themselves free from the restraints imposed by their inherited ideas concerning the ways in which they ought to act, and surrender themselves to the sway of their desires and lusts. And there are others who rise from an unintelligent obedience to these ideas, to an intelligent recognition of them as a more or less imperfect embodiment of the eternal truths of the Universe, and to a willing obedience to them as the right and proper

\* See chapter on "Religion," page 151.

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rules of Life. But I believe that there are none who are wholly destitute of these moral ideas, and who do not feel them at first to be binding upon them. These ideas may vary very considerably in character and strength (contrast them, for instance, in children brought up in the slums of our great cities), and they may be either disregarded, or intelligently apprehended; but in all cases they are present to some extent—an inseparable portion of that constitution of which we find ourselves possessed when we wake to consciousness.

“The great majority of men, however, neither shake themselves free from the restraints which these inherited and derived moral ideas impose, nor rise to an intelligent apprehension of them. They simply accept them, and endeavour with more or less earnestness to conform to them. Hence, though this can still be only called existence, it is a higher kind of existence than that of the man whose nature is entirely unregulated;—that condition in which the nature is a chaos, swayed hither and thither by passions, and desires, and feelings wholly uncontrolled by the will, and owning no law but desire. For this kind of existence is to a certain extent controlled; it does in some measure conform to the true laws of Life; it does use its powers to a certain extent as it should, *i. e.* in accordance with the modes in which the Universe acts

“But still it is only existence, and the man who has it cannot be said to live; for the use he makes of his powers is simply instinctive, not intelligent. He uses them in this way because he has inherited a bias to use them thus, not because he recognizes

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that this is the right way to use them, in virtue of what the Universe is.

"Whatever the bias may be, he conforms to it with equal readiness (compare the actions of an ordinary moral Englishman with those of a moral Hindu), and with equally strong convictions that that, and that only, is the right course of action.

"He never makes the appeal to Truth, never tries to verify his ideas by comparing them with Reality, never gets consciously in tune with the Universe, but only laboriously tries to conform to what he *has been told* that it is. Hence this kind of life is regulated by no great *principles*. There are rules in abundance, but they are arbitrary, and those who obey them do so blindly and unintelligently, because they form part of their moral stock-in-trade, not because they are alive to those fundamental relationships of which they are the expression.

"Indeed, for the most part, those rules of conduct, which are accepted as binding by men in this condition, have a very large admixture of precepts which relate simply to human conventions—conventions, moreover, which, in very many cases, have lost their meaning and significance. They once gave expression to men's genuine conceptions concerning the fitting modes of action which should be adopted by them in order to please the Deity, but have long ceased to be associated with these, and are conformed to only owing to the weight of custom and precedent which attaches to them.

"Though dead and meaningless, however, these rules still continue to be recognized as binding by those who regulate their conduct by the precepts

of an unverified inherited and acquired morality. For they have no power to distinguish between what is essential and what is non-essential,—between what is an arbitrary mode of expressing a truth, and what is an eternal law of the Universe. They can only appeal to authority—either that external one which speaks in the precepts of religion, and in the morality which is recognized by the age, or that internal one which gives expression to the moral ideas which heredity and early training have entailed on them.

“But in both, what is essential and what non-essential—the rules which give expression to what are the eternally right and proper courses of action, and the rules which refer to conventions, *i. e.* to particular expressions of those which have at various times been adopted—are inextricably mingled, and the man who lives by rules has no power to distinguish between them. For he has no consciousness of being in true and vital relationship with the Universe; he does not obey these rules of conduct because he knows and feels that they give expression to the eternal laws which govern these relations, in virtue of what he is and what the Universe is. He obeys them because he happens to find them in his conscience and in society, not because they are *true*. In this state do we find the great majority of men to be at present.

“The rules they conform to vary considerably, even enormously, according to the country or the position in which they are situated. With these I am not at present concerned. I am simply pointing out now the blind and unintelligent character of the

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obedience which they give to this inherited and acquired morality—the character of the obedience being always the same, whatever variations there may be in the character of the morality, or in the *quantity* of the obedience. Thus the pious Hindu conforms to the precepts of his religion, including all conventions relating to ablutions, sacrifices, etc., with just as firm—and just as blind and unintelligent—a conviction that he is doing the will and is pleasing in the sight of the Supreme Powers, as a moral Englishman conforms to the rules of morality and the religious conventions (such as the attendance on public worship, and the way of spending the Sunday) which are recognized as binding in this country. The morality and the conventions may widely differ, but the spirit in which they are conformed to is the same.

“Such men cannot be said to live—they exist. They do not regulate their powers freely and willingly in harmony with the consciously recognized modes in which the Universe works; they simply act on the unverified conceptions and ideas which they, and the age and country in which they live, happen to have.

“But something higher than this is possible to man; to something higher than this some men have attained. Some men there have been in every age who have attained to something more than a mere conformity to rules of morality, or a blind obedience to the precepts of religion and the dictates of conscience.

“They have been aroused to the consciousness of the great Not-Self which surrounds them. They

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have recognized that there is a great Spiritual Power in the Universe, with whose ceaseless energizing they can get into conscious harmony. They have become conscious of a Living Will, ever exerting itself in constant ways, and requiring them to exert themselves in similar ways. They have recognized the high obligation which rests upon them of conforming to the modes in which this Living Will acts, and have set themselves earnestly to the delightful task of learning to know it, and of using their powers in harmony with it.

“And doing this, they have felt the pulses of the mighty Life of the Universe thrill their whole being with an unutterable joy; they have felt, even in the midst of pain and outward distress, the blessedness of an indestructible peace. They have felt, the more they tried to consciously harmonize themselves with it, fuller tides of life sweeping through them from the Infinite Life of the Eternal Spirit; they have tasted those pleasures which are in His right hand for evermore.

“These have been the saints and seers of the world. They have been the men who have lived in conscious communion with the Central Reality, who have made touch with the eternally Real and True, and have found a satisfying delight in living in harmony with it. They have felt the living influences of that Perfect, Self-Existent Life, which, in unchanging fulness, endures from eternity to eternity, and have drunk pure, deep draughts of immortality from the inexhaustible ocean of its Truth, its Light, and its Love.



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“There have been, of course, many different degrees in the fulness with which this consciousness of harmony with the Eternal Spirit has been experienced. One Man alone has been conscious of perfect oneness with it, conscious of a communion and fellowship marred by no jars or discords. Him all the ages have been unanimous in proclaiming the Son of God.

“The rest, though tasting somewhat of the fulness of this Life, have been conscious of many jarring notes. They have been conscious that they have only imperfectly apprehended, and only partially brought their whole nature into harmony with, that Central Reality of which they have the glorious consciousness. But still they have taken the grand step from existence to life, in attaining to a personal knowledge of this Living Will, and in recognizing that it is their duty (and at the same time a joy and delight) to conform to it. Such men have found the endeavour to know it better, and get into fuller harmony with it, the one supremely worthy ambition, the one supremely possible achievement in life.

“I do not enter now into a detailed examination of the causes of this mysterious change from existence into life, nor into other interesting questions connected with the subject.\* The change is a mysterious one, and for centuries has greatly exercised the minds of theologians. The exact mode in which the transition is effected probably varies in the case of each individual, but in every case the result is the

\* See note on this subject in the chapter on “Religion.”



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same. That result is the recognition by the personality of a Personality in the Universe—a Personality with the laws of whose Life the awakened spirit realizes that it is its supreme duty and delight to get into harmony—a harmony which is a conscious harmony, a sympathetic vibration of life with Life, of soul with Soul. That, and that only, is Life.

“Not till a man, passing beyond all mere unintelligent conformity to rules of morality and human conventions, strives to possess himself, in conscious and intelligent harmony with the principles which regulate the Central Life of the Universe—not till then can he be said to begin to live, for not till then can the Eternal Spirit begin to pour through the open channels of his being the inexhaustible flood of His fulness; not till then can the chords of his nature vibrate with the mighty music of the Heart of the Eternal.”

To the above note, the following, which immediately succeeds it in my friend's note-book, is evidently supplementary:—

“It has long been a tenet of religion that the only opportunity afforded to man of gaining self-mastery, and joining in the life of the Eternal, is that which the present life affords.

“I cannot see any reason for this conclusion, and I can see many reasons for coming to a contrary one. It was natural for men to hold this view in those times when narrower and less complete ideas concerning the human race, concerning Life, and concerning the Eternal held sway; but it seems impossible to hold it now, in the face of the fuller

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knowledge which we possess to-day on these subjects.

“For we know now that the individual cannot be held responsible for all the defects and imperfections of his nature; that when he wakes to consciousness it is not as a pure, white soul, unsullied by evil, but as a member of a race scored with imperfections, of which he is perforce compelled to take a share,—often having to undertake a lifelong struggle against feelings and desires entailed in him by heredity, which he loathes from his inmost soul. We know now that the short span of human life is far too brief to decide that struggle, even when the man has awakened to a clear consciousness of the right and the true; and that there are many, perhaps the majority of the race, who, through no fault of their own, never in this life wake to this consciousness—never even have the chance of attaining to Life.

“Moreover, we have no warrant in experience for concluding that character is finally fixed in any case by the life lived here. The greatest saint has felt how feeble has been his touch on Life, compared with all its infinite possibilities; and the greatest sinner has never been so vile as to warrant us in dogmatically affirming that he has lost all chance of winning Life.

“And above all, it is unbelievable that the Eternal Fact which the best have believed to be also the Eternal Love, which has created us to share eternally in its Life and its Love, can fail in its endeavour,—can rest content with only a partial harvest of the souls it has brought into existence,—can

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endure either to let some wander lone and lost in its universe for ever, or to blot them out of being altogether as abortions, whom the utmost skill could not cure, whom the utmost love could not win.

"But while believing, for these reasons, that the opportunities of gaining Life are not limited to this world—that, indeed, they are not limited at all, but are as infinite and eternal as 'that God who ever lives and loves'—we must not lose sight of other aspects of the question.

"It must never be forgotten that the Great Personality—the Living Will of which man is conscious—energizes in constant ways, and that only by using his powers in similar ways can man share in its endless Life.

"In other words, it has a *moral character*, which we designate by the term 'holiness,' and the spirit of its Life is Love. Consequently, man must make these the key-note of *his* life, if he would live in harmony with it and share in its fulness. Why it is so we do not know—it is not likely we shall ever know. We touch here the fundamental characteristics of being. God is Light, and God is Love; that is, final, ultimate Truth; our spirits can feel it and rejoice in it; our minds can never understand it.

"But feel it our spirits must before they can enter into Life. The whole Universe is tuned to the key-note of Love, and to it our spirits must be tuned in order to become 'one' with it; we must remain for ever in the outer darkness until we have willingly conformed to that fundamental law of all Life. Nothing else *is* Life but this willing energizing of

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the spirit of man in conscious harmony with the energizing of the Eternal Spirit.

"Now is is useless to deny that man may long exist without thus consciously energizing in harmony with the Eternal Spirit. It is evident that he may even long exist without consciously possessing himself in any way, being simply the sport of unguided feelings, passions, and impulses, and also that his endeavour to regulate himself may long be unintelligent, and prompted by fear and not by love. Still further, it cannot be denied that the liberty which he possesses permits him to consciously energize in opposition to the Eternal,—permits of his doing evil when he knows that to do good is the true and only law of Life,—permits of his braving the Eternal and going on his own wild, wilful way in spite of clear knowledge of what He is.

"I have put the case thus strongly because there do seem to be extreme cases of this kind—men, for example, like Iago, or the villain in *The Ring and the Book*. I put it thus strongly with some hesitation, however, for I think it is open to question (the point, so far as I am aware, never seems to have been discussed) as to whether a man ever wilfully acts in opposition to and defiance of *convictions* concerning spiritual truths which he *feels and realizes*.

"That he often does act in defiance of unverified ideas and opinions which he has unhesitatingly accepted as true, is certain; but whether, having come face to face with Reality, having had eternal truths borne in upon him, he ever has had, or can have, the mad wilfulness to shape his course in defiance of

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them, seems doubtful. Leaving that point, however, and granting that it may be so, it follows that man possesses large—extremely large—power of missing Life, and energizing in other ways than those in which he must energize in order to share in the Life of the Eternal. The extent of this power we do not know, and consequently we cannot tell how long he may by this wilfulness shut himself out from Life. Surely, however, it cannot be for ever. Milton's Satan is possible for ever in a universe governed by a God whose chief attributes are power and justice, but not in a universe guided by a God who is Love.

"Be that as it may, we must never lose sight of these two essential facts: First, that there is only one right way in which man can use his power of self-determination, because there is only one way in which the Central Power in the Universe energizes; there is only one key-note to which man can rightly tune his being—the key-note of love—because that is the key-note to which the Being of the Eternal Spirit is tuned. And, secondly, that man possesses an unknown quantity of power to act in other ways than that in which he should act; to choose some other end than the final one of willing co-operation with the energizings of the Infinite Spirit; and that all such perverse action and choice of necessity shut him out from Life, and, sooner or later, bring upon him sorrow and pain and woe,—the stern reactions of the Universe against the violations of its eternal laws.

"The realization of these truths will prevent any man who ventures to look forward with full assur-

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ance of hope to the final consummation of all things—when the whole of humanity shall have been lifted into conscious oneness with the Eternal Life of the Infinite Spirit—from viewing lightly man's wilful departures from the Right and the True. He will be unable to contemplate with easy indifference the sins and follies of humanity. For he will know and feel that all such sins and follies *cannot* but end in woe and misery, besides feeling—with an intensity proportionate to the degree in which he himself experiences the satisfying sweetness of the life of conscious oneness with the Eternal—what a poor, marred existence such men have, how pitifully they misuse the glorious gifts which they possess, how lamentable it is that they should wander thus in the darkness, when infinite glories of Life and infinite fulness of Life are within their power to grasp.

"The man who knows what true Life is, however strongly he may believe that the Infinite Love will in the end win all men to itself, can never fail to become an apostle and the ambassador of that Love to those who know it not. To walk in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth, even to that final goal of self-renouncing Love which He arrived at by His death, must ever be a divinely compelling necessity for those who know anything of that oneness with the Eternal Spirit which in such full measure He enjoyed: they will be willing even to die to win men to that Life when once they have tasted its sweetness and proved its supreme worth. Love will compel them to strive with all their power to lift their fellow-men up to the Life of Love."



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"The above considerations\* are based on the assumption that both existence and life are unending.

"If they express the truth concerning the nature of the Eternal and the nature of man, I cannot see how this assumption can be avoided; infinite time can alone form a fitting time-sphere for beings framed to share in the Life of the Eternal.

"And if the heart of the Eternal is Love,—if Love brought man into being with the intent to make him share for ever in the sweetness of its unending blessedness,—I cannot see how we can avoid the conclusion that it will *succeed* in its beneficent purposes.

"The great world-processes may take long to complete; but if man and God are what I believe them to be, only one consummation is possible. When the Eternal pronounces His great work finished, the whole phalanx of humanity must stand before Him in the full possession of conscious power, and of conscious control over it, in harmony with the principles which regulate His Being, and therefore all being. And the muster-roll will never be called so long as one soul still wanders in the Universe unpossessed of its birthright, unconscious of this perfection of Life, irresponsive to the mighty throbbing of that Living Love, whose pulses beat from eternity to eternity—that Living Love which takes form in Universes, and stars, and organisms,

\*[I am still copying my friend's manuscripts, but, from the line which he draws, he apparently wrote this note after reading over the previous one, and probably after an interval of time.]



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and souls, in the never-tiring endeavour to give fuller expression to its own rapturous Life.

“If, however, what I have written above does not express the truth of things;—if that great Power, in whose presence we unceasingly are, does not energize in constant ways, with which we can get into conscious harmony; or if, having created us for that end, it cannot realize it; or if, again, its Life is not endless, and the whole Universe is sweeping to some fathomless pit of utmost nothingness—then it is useless to discuss this question, or indeed any question, except the one how to accomplish our annihilation; for existence is a curse, and life not worth living.

“The view we take of this matter must entirely depend on the convictions which we hold concerning the nature and character of the Eternal, and the nature of man; discussion is superfluous if we agree on these points; useless if we differ.

“It may be noted, however, that the assumption that existence is endless underlies the whole of the teaching of Jesus, and has been almost universally accepted by those who have embraced the Christian religion.

“Christianity has long familiarized men’s minds with the idea of a life of unending happiness in store for the good, and one of unending misery for the bad; and though the forms which this doctrine has assumed have almost wholly obscured the real teaching of Jesus, yet there is no doubt that the assumption of the unending nature of all existence which underlies it is one which the Great Teacher made. His teaching, indeed, is unintelligible without it. It has only been owing to the misunder-

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standing of that teaching, and the introduction of questions which never occupied His attention at all, that some, of late years, have begun to question that assumption, and to anticipate annihilation for the bad, instead of eternal misery. And truly, if Jesus had taught that the wicked would be fixed for ever in a state of misery after death, or at any future time, pity and compassion might well prompt us to endeavour to give to the word 'eternal,' when applied to that state, some other meaning than that of endless time, or in some other way to get rid of an idea so repulsive to our noblest feelings, and so inconsistent with Jesus' own teaching concerning the character of the Eternal.

"But in reality, the question as to whether the individuals of the race would immediately after death, or at any future time, be finally fixed in a state of bliss or woe—the question which has most occupied the minds of those who have accepted the teaching as authoritative—was one which never engaged the attention of Jesus at all. The truths He taught are spiritual truths, which must remain true as long as the Eternal endures. They relate to eternal *states of being*, in one or other of which all men must necessarily be. They assume that man has the power of eternally being in one or other of these states, but they lie in a wholly different sphere from all questions relating to the ultimate destiny of the individual. On questions of this sort, Jesus spoke not a word. He contented Himself with pointing out the eternal characteristics of true Life—that high Life of oneness with the Eternal which He lived.

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“He showed men how they might ‘enter into Life,’ by showing them what the Life of the Eternal was. Life lived on any other lines, He taught, was not Life. It was only a state of existence full of unrest,—of weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, having these qualities pertaining to it eternally, and tending continually to produce them more completely, because it was out of harmony with the Life of the Eternal; just as the Life which He revealed was an eternally joyful and blessed one because it was in harmony with the Life of Him whom He called God and Father.

“‘I show you,’ He said, ‘what Life is. I declare to you the key-note to which the Universe is tuned. God is Love; and therefore it is only by becoming pure and holy that you can live in harmony with Him. God is your Father; therefore it is only by becoming His sons that you can share in all His wealth of Life, and Light and Love. These are the fundamental characteristics of the Universe; the constant ways in which the Eternal Spirit energizes; unless you willingly conform to these, you cannot have Life; you must eternally exist in a state of unrest and dissatisfaction.’

“It will be at once seen how totally distinct from this teaching are all philosophical speculations concerning the ultimate destiny of any individual of the race; while, at the same time—inasmuch as the proclamation of eternal states of joy or woe requires by implication the eternal existence of beings to enjoy or suffer in those states—the assumption of the endlessness of existence underlies it.

"How long men will continue to exist miserably before they learn to live;—how often the avenging waves of the Divine Nemesis will sweep away the fabrics they have painfully reared, and leave them to begin their labours anew, till, baffled and broken, they learn their utter inability to accomplish anything, save in harmony with the Eternal Will of the Eternal Spirit,—this we know not; how *can* we know?"

I find many short notes scattered through my friend's note-books and manuscripts embodying thoughts more or less closely related to the above. A few of these I insert here, before concluding the chapter.

"Pondering over the present state of the race, I am forced to the conclusion that what we see is only the early stage of a vast development. Such hard-won experience cannot be lost; such lofty powers cannot be wasted; some glorious consummation must await a race of beings so highly gifted and given such difficult paths to tread. We stand at a point in that development at which the outline of the great world-plan can be dimly discerned; but all the filling in has yet to be accomplished.

"The little fragment of the life of the individual, which is all we see here, absolutely forces us to the conclusion that there is endless life ahead. Man's undeveloped powers, unrealized hopes, uncompensated pains, unretrieved errors, unrepented sins, cannot be petrified by the accident of death; they must be perfected, realized, justified, remedied, atoned for."

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"I suspect we cannot even begin to dream at present what this strange phenomena is which we call Life, which underlies all the faculties, powers, and functions of the body and mind, but is not they.

"It pulses and throbs through Nature, appearing in man, in animals, in plants; in forms gigantic as the elephant, and forms too minute to be made visible by the strongest microscope.

"It has such a desire to express itself that it makes a thousandfold more provision for its perpetuation than is necessary, displaying in this respect a prodigality which, were we not, owing to our complete ignorance, compelled to suspend our judgment, we should be tempted to designate waste. We know nothing of it; the closest scrutiny of Science has failed to bring us any nearer to the solution of the mystery.

"We can only accept the fact; and endeavour to complete that correspondence which, experience shows us, is possible between life as we find it in ourselves, and the Universe throbbing with Life which is without us."

"Argument is useless with men who live in ideas; it is superfluous with those who live in Truth. To live, speak, act, in the Truth, as far as we see and know it—that is the one thing needful. We are bound by so doing to win those who are 'of the Truth,' sooner or later.

"As to why there are some who are not 'of the Truth,' that question can never be answered; we can only accept the fact, as Jesus did. Yet is there a way to win them,—a sure way, I think, sooner or

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later; and that is, by dying for them. They will thus be won to the Truth some day, through the constraining power of self-sacrificing Love.

"In this glorious work of redemption we can all take a part; dying for men, and thus breaking the power of sin and selfishness, even as Jesus did. And since the Central Fact of the Universe is Love, all such 'dying' is one with that Central Life, since Love is a continual giving away of self.

"Hence it is true, eternally, everlastingly, infinitely true, you can never get to the bottom of the Truth, that the path to Life is the path of self-renunciation."

"We men here on earth are like travelers belated in the snow; we must keep moving or we die. The strong desire is to rest; to build a little paradise, and take our ease therein; to live in the environment, the habits, the thoughts, which have gathered round us, or into which we have drifted.

"But such life is death. We are heirs of the Infinite, and contentment with the finite is a selling of our birthright for a mess of pottage. Therefore does Heaven never allow us to keep our little paradise long; or, if she does, it is the mark of her severest displeasure. Rather she continually urges us to press on, and seize the greater good which she would fain bestow upon us.

"Therefore she sends shocks, calamities, bewilderingments, pains, sorrows, cares, losses, sickness, death."

"Men can get what they like in life, but never without sacrifices. Let them choose how they will, their choice inevitably throws other things into op-



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position, because they are, by their very nature, contraries to the things they choose.

“This is owing to the fact that man possesses various orders of powers, and, consequently, is enabled to make choice of various orders of ‘the good.’ But as he is at present constituted, and holding the relations which he at present does with the Universe, he cannot make choice of any one of these, and set himself steadily to the pursuit of it, without disregarding some of the conditions which must be complied with if some other ‘good’ is to be gained. No choice which he can make, no course of action which he may devise, can at once put him into possession of all the ‘good’ at which he is capable of arriving.

“This being so, the true art of living must consist in sacrificing lower ‘goods’ for higher ones; temporal advantages for eternal ones; fleeting pleasures for abiding ones; that which belongs to our conditioning for that which belongs to our personality. It is an art but little understood. Few recognize the necessity of practising it. Continually do we find people (most inconsistently) striving after lower forms of the ‘good’ (or even after higher ones), and yet grumbling that they do not have the others as well. How many men do we find who have devoted all their energies to gaining wealth, disappointed because it does not bring with it peace, and satisfaction for the higher needs of their nature? How many good and pious people do we find disappointed because their goodness does not bring them success in life? And yet how irrational to expect it! The man who seeks wealth as the chief



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'good' gets what wealth can give—freedom from care concerning the wants of the body, and a large share in the good things of this life; this is all wealth *can* give. The man who lives a good and honest life gets the esteem of all good men, and the consciousness of rectitude; but has no right to expect a large measure of worldly success as the direct result of his goodness and honesty. As each sows, so he reaps; but the harvest is of the same kind as the seed sown. Heaven does not reward the man who makes the pursuit of wealth his first concern, with spirituality; nor the man who aims at spirituality, with worldly success.

"The entire ignorance which men display of these laws of sowing and reaping is nowhere more clearly manifested than in marriage.

"Men choose their wives,—men and women choose one another,—for a great variety of reasons, such as beauty, grace, amiability, money, etc.; and as a rule they get what they desire. But what folly to expect as *well* (having only taken one thing into account in making their choice) all those other qualities and virtues which are necessary in order to make the union a happy one! What folly to make no attempt to cultivate these, when their necessity has been made manifest! Only when they choose each other for themselves—for what they *are* and not for what they *have*, for spiritual worth and not for physical beauty or wealth—can they expect those results which a union founded on such a basis can produce,—trust, sympathy, affection, love!"

"The highest 'good' of which a man can become

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possessed must be that which pertains to his personality, not anything which pertains to the conditions which surround it. These are liable to change and decay, but that abides. Any 'good' won for the body or the mind must be inferior to that won for the spirit. To know how *to be* is to have the highest knowledge; to possess one's self is to gain the greatest wealth.

"And truly, if there is one end which all men alike, exclusive of their outward circumstances or their various temperaments and talents, can set before themselves and to which they can attain; if there is one end which all the chances and changes, all the trials and sorrows and disappointments of life, as well as its joys and successes, tend towards,—it is this end of self-possession. We cannot all have, but we can all *be*; and to be on certain well-defined lines, not difficult to recognize when the soul earnestly seeks, is the end to which the whole Universe is striving to lead us."

"It is doubtless an ordainment of Infinite Wisdom and Love that here, in the initial stages of being, when we have not yet learned to possess ourselves, or to use our wills aright, our volitions cannot take immediate effect. They cannot immediately accomplish themselves, but only mediately, on compliance with such conditions as our constitutions and the laws of the material universe impose. That every transgression or neglect of these conditions brings the inevitable consequences of pain and woe is doubtless a no less beneficial arrangement.

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"A being endowed with will, in order to learn to possess itself (and it must learn to possess itself; we cannot conceive of it as instinctively knowing how to possess itself, without experience), must be conditioned; and in the initial stages, the more difficult it is for it to will in opposition to its conditions, the more easy will it be for it to learn how to possess itself in harmony with the Eternal Will.

"When through these conditions that lesson is learnt, we may well suppose that these, being no longer needed, will be removed; if, indeed, the attainment of self-possession does not itself remove them. We may doubtless look forward to a further release from hampering conditions when we put off this husk of flesh, if we have well learnt what its restraints can teach us. Meanwhile let us be thankful that we are hampered and restrained. What fearful mischief we should work if every unregulated volition took immediate effect!"

"More and more fully do I become convinced, as life goes on, that the whole of the varied experience which it brings has a purpose,—that it is intended to produce *spiritual results*; that these are the only normal results which can be produced. To strive for any others is to fight against the whole current of the Universe, and must result in utter defeat.

"To learn willingly to *be* what the Eternal Spirit *is*,—that is the lesson we have set us here; that is the lesson which the Eternal is teaching to every soul, as fast as the conditions of human freedom permit it to learn, and Him to teach."

## CHAPTER IV

### FORCES

I GIVE in this chapter an essay which I find among my friend's manuscripts on "The Utilization of Forces." Much of the matter which it contains is intimately connected with what I have embodied in the previous chapters, and forms, I think, a not unfitting sequel to them. Some repetition of thoughts which the previous chapters contain occurs in it, but I have deemed it best to give it as it stands, finding it impossible, indeed, to omit or transfer anything without obscuring the argument, and marring the development of the thought. The essay is interesting, because, so far as I can discover, it was his final and most deliberate attempt to express in scientific phraseology the higher truths of Life. Hereafter, as the reader will see in the following chapters, having arrived at the conclusion that the "fundamental environment" of which man is conscious is a "Living Spirit," he speaks of it, and of the "correspondence" man can have with it, not in the language of Science, but of human intercourse and affection.

"The secret of success in life is to utilize forces. It is only by linking himself to, and falling into the line of march of, the great forces by which he is surrounded, that man can live. If he ignores or opposes them, they will sweep over him and crush

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him; but if he works with them, and utilizes them, there seems to be hardly any limit to the control which he may gain over them. By stooping to obey them, he becomes their lord and master, and sways his environment with regal power.

“These forces are of various orders, corresponding to the various orders of faculties which make up his complex nature; and in virtue of the possession of these various faculties he cannot help being conscious of them. But the consciousness of their existence is not accompanied by knowledge of the ways in which he must act in order to adjust himself to them, nor of the ways in which they work. It has been left for him to discover for himself, by observation and experience, the laws which regulate their flow amidst phenomena. He possesses no instinctive knowledge of them; the instinctive adjustment and correspondence which he now accomplishes with many of them, not being inherent in his nature, but being the result of the accumulated experience of the race, transmitted to him by heredity.

“The reason of the apparent inferiority of man in this respect to other living organisms is to be found in the fact of his real superiority. He has to accomplish his adjustment to the forces in the Universe for himself, and to learn to use them by observation and experience, because he *can* use them, and is not merely moulded by them passively. He possesses personality, *i. e.* self-consciousness and self-determination, which are manifestly higher endowments than those which are possessed by the lower animals, or by the members of the vegetable

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kingdom; in whose case the adjustment to, and correspondence with, their environment is unconscious and instinctive. The possession of these higher endowments brings with it the possibility of far higher life than can be attained by any other living organisms with which we are acquainted; they place man in an altogether higher plane of being. But they bring with them that peculiarity in his relation with the Universe which we term responsibility,—a peculiarity, the dim shadow of which, indeed, seems to appear in the animal world, but which in man alone is developed to such an extent as to become a dominating factor of his life. Man alone is fully conscious of power to use the faculties of which he finds himself possessed; and this peculiarity of his constitution, while it permits him to experience additional joys, also brings to him the possibility of experiencing deeper woes than can come to organisms not endowed with this high gift. For the consciousness of power to use faculties involves the consciousness of power to misuse them, which misuse must inevitably be followed, sooner or later, by dire retribution.

“Moreover, the power which man possesses to use consciously his faculties, and to control with them the forces without him, brings with it the commanding necessity that he *shall* use them, and *shall* master and turn to his own use these external forces.

“Having power to adjust himself to the Universe, and to use its forces for his purposes, he does not need, in fact he could not possibly have, that instinctive or unconscious adjustment and corre-



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spondence with it, which we find in the case of less nobly endowed organisms.

"Consequently, man has to learn by experience how rightly to use his faculties, and how to avoid conflict with, and to enlist in his services, the forces by which he is surrounded.

"The Universe lies at his feet; but it can only become his prize if he earnestly sets himself to read its open secrets. With the powers at his command he can exercise boundless control over it; but he must do it in its way, not in his own. Any departure from its ways are visited with certain punishment.

"Use his powers he must, and the Universe will give him unbounded help if he uses them aright, but it quickly warns him of all misuse. The pains it inflicts when the misuse occurs through ignorance are sharp enough, but tenfold greater woes ensue when such misuse is wilful—I mean, more particularly, in cases where men know what is morally right, and do not do it,—from which negligence ensues the consciousness of guilt.

"This is the price which man has to pay for his high gifts—a price which, I doubt not, is well worth the paying, though sometimes we may feel inclined to doubt it when we look around us, and see how sternly the price is exacted. The pain, woe, and unrest of which the world is so full, seem a heavy price to pay for the privilege of learning to live. But I do not doubt that the price will not be deemed excessive when we have learnt the lesson—when the Universe is at our feet, with all its boundless wealth of Life and Joy. Then we shall



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know that the slow, painful steps by which man advanced to the appropriation of his birthright were not too painful or too slow; that what seemed to us, in our blindness, needless pain and uncalled-for delay, was needful to the uttermost throb, to the last lingering second. Then shall we know that Heaven's justice is mercy, and her stern retribution Love, because then we shall see and know that it was Love which planned and guided all, and led us through pain, and woe, and sorrow, and fear up to the full consciousness of its own rapturous Life, up to the full participation of its eternal Joy.

"This is the goal of the great world-development in the midst of which we find ourselves. We are being trained to live; not that poor, meagre existence which so many, not yet conscious of their nobility, so eagerly grasp at now, but the high life of conscious, willing, balanced adjustment and response to the Universe in all the modes in which it makes itself known to us—Matter, Mind, Spirit. The task which the Infinite Spirit has set Himself to accomplish, and which we now see Him steadily accomplishing, is the task of training in the right use of faculties, and in the right use of *themselves*, beings endowed with personality; and methinks it is a task fit to engage the powers of the Eternal.

"The freedom of action and power of choice which man possesses allow him to make a selection from the different orders of forces which energize around him, and to work out various results by their means—results which necessarily correspond in nature and character to the nature and character of the forces he uses. He has a choice of the end

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to which he can direct his attention, and, whichever he may choose, he is bound to succeed in achieving it; for there is no such thing as 'iron destiny.' All circumstances are plastic in his hands. No disadvantages of birth, no difficulties which he may encounter, can hinder him from doing what he makes up his mind to do, or from gaining what he is determined to gain. The greatest disadvantages and the most adverse circumstances, or those which appear such, if he only is skillful in the use he makes of them, will afford him the greatest opportunities for achieving his object. He has the moulding of his own destiny, and has only himself to blame if, after he has done so, he is not contented with the result.

"But, as I have said, the nature and character of the results he can achieve by the use of the forces around him, correspond to the nature and character of the forces themselves;—the ends at which they will enable him to arrive are determined by the rank and quality of the force.

"Thus there are physical forces, by the utilizing of which man may assert his supremacy over the world of matter; may rule it, instead of being ruled by it; may emancipate himself from the conditions in the midst of which he finds himself, or modify them to suit his needs. He can use the lightning to flash his messages from continent to continent; the hurricane will grind his corn for him; the flood will spin his cotton; he can harness fire and water to carry him as swiftly as a bird over land and sea.

"The ends which he accomplishes by the skillful use of these physical forces are thus, it will be

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seen, of the same order and quality as the Forces themselves. They are confined to man's physical environment; they consist in modifications of his external conditions, so far as they relate to that environment, to suit his wishes.

"If he works for these ends, either primarily, by endeavouring directly to win control over these physical forces, or secondarily, by gaining what will put him in a position to use the appliances which already exist for controlling them—*i. e.* by gaining wealth—he will without doubt succeed, and gain his end. But he must not expect to gain other ends as well, if he has thrown all his energies into the endeavour to gain this one, and if he has never attempted to utilize the other forces of the Universe of which he is conscious, and over which he can exercise control.

"For there are other ends which man can set before himself, besides that one of mastering physical forces and modifying his physical environment. And there are other forces in the Universe, the utilization of which will enable him to achieve greater and more lasting results than he can achieve by the utilization of physical forces. He has intellectual powers, to the cultivation of which he can direct his attention, and which will bring to him the high prize of knowledge; powers which, indeed, can partially find room for exercise and development in gaining mastery over physical forces, but which will never yield him all the satisfaction which they *can* yield unless he makes not these material ends, but intellectual ones, his goal.

"Further than that, he has personal powers which

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make him conscious of a Personal Power outside him. He is conscious that there is a Force in the Universe, of a similar quality to the force of personality within him, by the nature of which his personal powers are strictly controlled, and which gives him plain intimations when he disregards the laws which regulate its flow. It is true that he has hardly yet well begun the task of conforming to the laws which regulate the flow of this highest Force—that for the most part he contents himself with the very partial knowledge concerning it which happens to be the common property of the age in which he is living, and seldom troubles himself to ascertain whether fuller and truer knowledge is attainable. But it is also true that the disastrous consequences of this ignorance and indifference never fail to come upon him. He cannot with impunity ignore any of the forces by which he is surrounded, more especially the Highest and Strongest of them all. His neglect of it, and the consequences of his failure to adjust himself to it, are everywhere to be seen in the unrest and dissatisfaction which most men exhibit in their lives; in the woe of which the world is so full; and in the greater part of its pain and sorrow. For this Spiritual Force, being the strongest and most fundamental of all the forces of which man is conscious (all others being, indeed, I believe, resolvable into this),\* and demanding that he should exercise, in order to correspond with it, the most fundamental and the most distinctive characteristic of his nature, all want of harmony with it makes itself felt through the whole of the environment of

\* See Chapter II.

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which he is conscious, and results in a disturbance of the due relations with all other forces; which consequently retaliate on him in the form of pain, or care, or mental unrest for all his failures to adjust himself properly to them. It is at once man's duty and his privilege to adjust himself to the forces which surround him, and to utilize them all; but more especially to gain full knowledge and make full use of that Strongest and most Fundamental of them of which he is conscious in virtue of the possession of personality.

"It is of the highest importance, moreover, that, having the power to direct his attention to various ends, and to accomplish various results by the aid of these forces, he should, while not neglecting to make use of them all, avoid the error of setting before him, as his chief or ultimate aim, the achieving of results which, from the nature of the Forces he uses, cannot be ultimate—results, in arriving at which he does not take into account the higher forces, or the higher powers, and consequently higher needs, of his nature.

"That end can only be a final, ultimate end for man, and consequently can be the only end to the attainment of which he can confidently devote himself, which tends to produce the highest and most permanent results conceivable to him. These can only be arrived at by directing the highest and most fundamental of the powers of his nature to the discerning and utilization of the highest and most fundamental of the forces outside him; in other words, by effecting a full correspondence between

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his personality and the Personal Force of the Universe.

“Man can only succeed in gaining rest and satisfaction for his entire nature when he has succeeded in achieving this. And, further, the reaction of this highest Force, when he omits it from his calculations, is bound, sooner or later, to sweep over him and give him terrible evidence of the futility of the attempt to ignore it, and of the dire retribution which will follow any attempt to oppose it. The unerring way in which this highest Force reacts upon those who ignore or brave it, and nullifies any results which may be accomplished by even the most skillful use of lower forces, we see exemplified again and again in the lives of men.

“A striking instance of this is furnished by the career of the first Napoleon. He had the will and the skill to conquer Europe. But he took no account of that Personal Force which flows for ever in the direction of justice, truth, and righteousness, and, pressing on in his schemes of ambition regardless of it, before long the accumulated force which his resistance was continually storing up in greater strength, recoiled on him, scattered his schemes to the winds, and left him crushed and helpless.

“The exact reverse was the case with Jesus. All the forces of the world were against Him, and conspired to crush Him. But He lived, and worked steadily, in harmony with the highest Spiritual Force; and though at the close of His life He seemed hopelessly at the mercy of the forces He opposed, and their triumph over Him seemed complete, the eighteen centuries which have elapsed



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since His defeat have been one continuous demonstration of His victory,—one continuous vindication of the truths which He taught, and in harmony with which He lived; more especially that master-truth, that the force of Love is supreme in power over all the other forces in the Universe, and that only by linking ourselves with it, can eternal Life be gained.

“In saying that this highest Spiritual Force flows in the direction of justice, truth, and righteousness, I have assumed it to be true that these are the laws which regulate its flow, or rather, to use more accurate language, that it is in these terms that our generalized experience of its effects can be stated; for laws (though this has been too often forgotten) are simply formulated statements of the effects which forces produce in their manifestations to us through phenomena—effects which repeated observations have proved to be always similar under similar circumstances. It is, however, hardly an assumption that the manifestations of the Spiritual Force can be generalized under these laws. Whatever differences of opinion may have existed in bygone ages on this point, or may still exist among half-civilized or barbarious peoples the conclusions concerning the modes in which this Spiritual Force works are identical among the nobler races of mankind. They are embodied in the Moral Law. This Law is, indeed, recognized with very varying degrees of clearness, as well as obeyed with very varying degrees of obedience, by the different individuals who compose these races; but its grand



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outlines are acknowledged by all to be expressed by the terms 'Justice,' 'Truth,' and 'Righteousness.'

"I have already stated my believe that the consciousness which man has of the existence of forces outside him is not accompanied by knowledge of the ways in which they work, nor of the ways of which he must act in order to adjust himself to them. This, I have said, he has been left to find out by observation and experience.

"I do not except from this statement the knowledge at which man has arrived with regard to the modes in which the Spiritual Force works, which he has formulated in the terms I have just stated.

"I know that I venture here on debatable ground, and that in this region there are new factors to be taken into account, which make the problem an extremely complicated one. Possibly I may not yet have truly and rightly estimated these. At present I can only say that I have hitherto failed to see any insuperable difficulties in the way of holding that the grand law of development by experience (which, we know, is the law which governs man's adjustment to and control over the forces of the physical world) holds good also with regard to his relations with the Spiritual Force. Into the intricacies of this problem, however, I will not further enter at present.\*

"As physical forces manifest themselves through phenomena, so does the Spiritual Force manifest itself in human life. Here its presence and power are manifestly felt; for man, in virtue of the posses-

\*For further consideration of this matter (vide Chapter VII.

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sion of personality, is directly conscious of it. But the fact that hitherto he has hardly utilized it at all, but has contented himself with a very imperfect adjustment to it, renders it far more difficult to trace its presence and influence than it is to trace the presence and influence of other forces. The laws of justice, truth, and righteousness assert themselves as unerringly in the lives of men as the law of gravitation does in the natural world. But, if, amid the multitude and complexity of the phenomena through which this latter law manifests itself, it remained long undiscovered, we ought not to be surprised if these Spiritual Laws are often almost impossible to trace amidst the immensely greater complexity and confusion of human life. Indeed, were we destitute of all previous knowledge on the subject, the task of deducing the laws of the Spiritual Force from the complicated facts of human life might well seem—as indeed, it has seemed in earlier ages of the world's history—a hopeless one to attempt.

“For there is this peculiarity about the workings of the Spiritual Force—it does not produce results so immediately as physical forces do. The law of righteousness has a wider sweep than the laws which express the action of physical forces. The effects which result from its action (or rather which can be formulated as it) are not so instantaneous as the effects produced by these. The short span of the life of the individual often does not allow time for its presence to become manifest; to determine the arc of the majestic curve along which

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it moves, the lives of generations and of nations must be studied.

“But we in these days do not require to start afresh in the investigation of either of these problems. Both the law of gravitation and the moral law are too well established to admit of being questioned. Indeed, just as it would be well-nigh impossible for us to emancipate ourselves from the intellectual atmosphere which surrounds us from our birth, which is impregnated with this truth of physics, so it would be even more impossible to emancipate ourselves from the moral atmosphere in which we are immersed, which is impregnated with this truth of morals, and from the still stronger testimony of conscience.\* We are the heirs of all the ages; we do not stand where our fathers stood; we could not if we would. We inherit the accumulated experience of the world with regard to all the forces which surround us—the spiritual as well as the physical. It would be folly (even if it were possible) to reject this heritage of the past, and to start on the lonely quest for law amidst the labyrinths in which it hides itself in the phenomenal world. We should be thankful that we can appropriate the precious results which have been arrived at by the heavy travail of humanity in the ages which are past, and endeavour to show by our nobler lives that its pangs have not been in vain.

“It is folly to waste time and strength in rediscovering what has already been discovered. De-

\*In which, it will be remembered, my friend held that heredity played a very important part with most men (vide Chapter IV).

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pend upon it, the Universe yet contains an innumerable host of undiscovered truths; let us press on to discover them. Let us accept the truths which the past has bequeathed to us—*verifying* them, as we speedily can, by bringing our lives into tune with them—and, from the more elevated platform which we are thus enabled to reach, take a deeper plunge into the fathomless ocean of Truth.

“Even if our experience does not for a considerable time enable us to verify the conclusions at which previous generations have arrived with regard to the modes in which the Spiritual Force works—(and this may not improbably happen, owing to the fact to which I have just alluded, that this Force has a wider sweep, and does not produce such instantaneous effects as the physical forces), it is only wisdom for us to accept them, and to regulate our lives by them. For who are we, that we should dare—even when experience is most bewildering, when pain is sharpest, and sorrow heaviest, and hope in justice and right most faint,—to question the truthfulness of those clear and unhesitating utterances which in all ages have come from the lips (their hearts approving) of those whom the world acknowledges to be her noblest and best; more especially from the lips of Him whose pure white life, clear vision, Divine wisdom, and still Diviner love, place Him without peer on the highest pinnacle as the most glorious of earth’s Sons,—those clear utterances which assure us that the laws which unceasingly regulate the flow of the Spiritual Force, and to which man must conform himself if he would find rest and satisfaction, and live in

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harmony with the Universe, are indubitably the laws of justice and of righteousness, of mercy and of love?

“It may be said that there are many important exceptions to the doctrine I have enunciated that the Spiritual Force always reacts upon those who ignore or brave it, and nullifies the results which they may have attempted to achieve without taking it into account. ‘What,’ it may be asked, ‘about those numerous cases of prosperous villainy with which history, and possibly our own experience, makes us acquainted? Where is there any indication in these cases of the reactions of the Spiritual Force? These men have scorned the laws of righteousness, and have occupied themselves with schemes of selfish indulgence and lawless ambition in open defiance of them, and no avenging Nemesis has overtaken them; they have achieved their purposes, and lived out their days in wealth and honour, and even died, many of them, without fear or remorse.’

“The objection is a pertinent one. The facts on which it is based long perplexed the minds of the best men of the Hebrew nation, and they never seem to have arrived at a quite satisfactory explanation of them. In fact, they could not; they did not know enough about the ways in which the Spiritual Force works in life to be able to solve the problem. It says much for their faith, and hope, that they were still able to trust in the Eternal, and to believe that He ruled righteously in the earth, with that insoluble problem weighing on their minds.

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“For us, however, the problem is not insoluble. We know now far more about the workings of forces than the Hebrews did,—incalculably more than they knew about the workings of physical forces, and far more than they knew about the workings of the Spiritual Force.

“I think it is quite possible to show that here too the balance of justice is even, and that such laws as ‘action and reaction are mutual and opposite,’ or ‘every effect must have an adequate cause,’ are as true with regard to the manifestations of the Spiritual Force as they are of physical ones.

“There were two reasons which prevented the Hebrews who grappled with this problem from arriving at the correct solution of it. The first was their erroneous limitation of the time within which they expected the reactions of the Spiritual Force to take place, to the lifetime of the man who neglected or braved it. The second was their misunderstanding of the real nature of the results which follow from living in harmony with it, and of the end which can be arrived at by co-operating with it—in other words, ignorance of the nature and quality of the Life which results from man’s adjustment to and his utilization of this force.

“With regard to the former, it was only natural that men who did not apprehend the nature of the Life which results from correspondence with the Spiritual Force sufficiently clearly to believe in immortality\* (though some of them seem to have very nearly arrived at this truth, grasping it, how-

\* My friend’s thoughts on the subject of Eternal Life are to be found in the previous chapter.



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ever, as a hope, not holding it confidently as a conviction)—should expect to see the reactions of the Spiritual Force manifesting themselves within the space of time which is occupied by a human life. In no other way could they imagine that the justice of the Eternal would work. For this reason the author of the Book of Job makes the Lord bless the latter end of Job more than his beginning, and give him 'twice as much as he had before,' *i.e.* 'fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she-asses,' and makes him live a hundred and fifty years after his afflictions, and see 'his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.'\* It was not really true to life—this conception of the poet with regard to the way in which the Spiritual Force responds to the efforts men make to adjust themselves to it, but it was ideally true, according to the conceptions which he had of it; it was the only ideal picture he could draw of life with his knowledge of it. Other Old Testament writers who perplexed their minds with the same problem—keeping their eyes more firmly fixed on the facts of life, and not finding satisfaction in imagining a poetic justice which they could not see—often arrived at far less satisfactory conclusions. They never quite lost the hope that the Eternal would reward every man according to his works, but often enough they could see no indications that He was doing this in the only way in which they conceived it possible to be done; and the cry they

\* Comp. Job i, 3; xlii. 10, 12.



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raised to Him was often almost the cry of despair. Look, for instance, at the tenth Psalm—

“‘Why standest Thou afar off, O Lord? why hidest Thou Thyself in times of trouble? The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor,’ and the cry closes with words which contain quite as much of yearning entreaty as of hope: ‘Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble, Thou wilt cause Thine ear to hear, to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress.’

“Many similar strains may be found in the Psalms,\* for this was a problem which perplexed many minds. They could not solve it; for even the fact, which they clearly recognized, that the Eternal visited the sins of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation, did not satisfy their sense of justice, when their non-recognition of the truth concerning Eternal Life prevented them from awarding any adequate compensation to the good man who died without being rewarded in this world for his goodness.

“I have already stated that the reactions of the Spiritual Force often extend over far larger spaces of time than are occupied by a single life. This has long been acknowledged; the many proverbs which in many languages express that truth testify convincingly to its antiquity and its widespread recognition. Indeed, no thoughtful student of human life can well avoid recognizing it, so plainly is that law of its working revealed in the inherited

\* See Psalms x. (vers. 1, 2, 17, 18), xi., xii., xvii. (especially vers. 13, 14), and lviii.

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traits of individuals, and in the history of nations. The *justice* of this law might well seem doubtful to those who had not yet laid hold of the truth of immortality, and who did not understand the nature of the rewards which correspondence with this force ensures,—as indeed it must still seem doubtful to those who do not understand what true Life is. But the fact is everywhere visible, and can be read in the open book of life by all who have the eyes to see. The Spiritual Force flows steadily and ceaselessly through the stream of human existence, ever producing its sure effects; effects of boundless beneficence for the individuals or nations who duly recognize the modes in which it exerts itself, and throw their lives into the sweep of its living influences; effects of direst woe for those who ignore or brave it—all the more certain and terrible (as in the case of the French Revolution) if its due action is retarded or thwarted for years or for generations.

“But the undue limitation of the time within which they expected the reactions of the Spiritual Force to manifest themselves was the most serious miscalculation made by those of the Hebrew nation who grappled with this problem.

“For they felt, and rightly felt, that there ought to be some personal and immediate results following on obedience to the commandments of the Eternal. And not understanding fully the real nature and quality of the Life which results from correspondence with the Spiritual Force (as, indeed, they could not, so long as their conceptions of life were bounded by the horizon of the present world), they

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could not conceive of any adequate result, except the rewarding by material prosperity of the man who obeyed His laws.

“And in thus expecting immediate personal results to follow from obedience to the laws of the Eternal, they were right. Their error lay in the conception they formed of the *character* of these results. They conceived that they must be *material*: they did not comprehend that the results which forces produce, differ according to the quality of the force, and the quality of the powers in man by which it is apprehended and utilized. Nor had they succeeded in more than dimly discerning the still higher truth that the true and lasting results which are achieved by aiming at the highest ends do not consist in *having* but in *being*; in other words, that Life, ever-expanding Life, is the most final result which can be arrived at by man: not any wealth, whether of material goods, or of knowledge, which may come to him in his endeavours more fully to lay hold of this final and infinite prize.

“But this is undoubtedly the fact; and is true with regard to all the orders of powers which we possess. Material possessions are of no value in themselves, they are only to be prized by us as means whereby the faculties which correspond with this part of our environment can be nourished and exercised,—(though in most cases they are sought after, not for the increased *Life* they bring, but for the increased *pleasure*—an altogether lower aim, and a fatal misdirection of the attention from the true mark). Similarly, the increased power

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which the intellectual faculties gain by exercise is the final end to be aimed at in exerting them; in other words, more intellectual Life—not the knowledge which we acquire in our endeavour to gain this greater fulness of Life. And this is truest of all in regard to the highest powers which we possess—the powers pertaining to personality. It is not the knowledge which we can gain by the right exercise of the powers of personality, still less the joys which result from their use, which is a final end. The only true end to strive for in exercising these powers is *Life*—the boundless, eternal Life which results from man's correspondence with the boundless, eternal, Spiritual Environment of which his possession of personality makes him conscious.

"The Hebrews, I say, who grappled with the problem did not fully understand this; nor did they understand that there are differences in the qualities of the results which follow from correspondence with the various orders of forces.

"They consequently looked for material results to follow from obedience to spiritual laws—a natural mistake for them to fall into with their limited time-view and imperfect knowledge of the Spiritual Force, but none the less a mistake, rendering it impossible for them to solve the problem.

"For though doubtless there is a considerable amount of truth in the proverb, 'Honesty is the best policy,' and in the long run a man who lives by the laws of justice and righteousness is likely to have as much, if not more, worldly success than the man who does not; yet not only is the reverse

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of this, in a great many cases, likely to happen, but it is altogether a mistake to expect these results to follow from obedience to laws of an altogether different order.

“The true results which follow from obedience to spiritual laws are not material, but spiritual. Obedience to the laws of justice and righteousness brings to the man who obeys sure and satisfying results, in an increased knowledge of what they are, and increased delight in living in harmony with them. Inasmuch as the Force which makes for righteousness is the highest and strongest of which we can have consciousness, and ultimately brings everything into conformity with its laws, obedience to them may (indirectly) produce material results for the man who obeys; but not unless he obeys as well the laws which regulate the flow of the forces which directly produce these results. But it is not by any means certain that these results will be produced. It is no part of the direct purpose of the Spiritual Force to produce them; and the man who obeys,—living among men who do not obey, but who make it their end to achieve material results, without taking this highest Force into consideration,—is far more likely to suffer (materially) by his obedience than to gain by it.

“And this brings me to the real answer to the objections which, I supposed, could be raised to the statement that the Spiritual Force is bound to react on the man who ignores or braves it.

“The Spiritual Force does not always react upon the man who neglects it, by nullifying the results

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which he has striven to achieve without taking it into account. There *are* many important exceptions to the rule, which is illustrated by the career of the first Napoleon. It often does thus react. The career of Cagliostro perhaps affords a more striking confirmation of this fact than even that of Napoleon. But more often reactions manifest themselves during succeeding generations than during the lifetime of the individual who has ignored it. This fact, moreover, must also be taken into account—that even the men who ignore it most generally do adjust themselves to such an extent to the most universally recognized of the modes in which it energizes, as to avoid being immediately shattered by antagonism to it. Consequently, they often arrive safely at life's close, prosperous with that prosperity which can be arrived at by skilful adjustment to and utilization of other forces, and apparently untouched by the reactions of the Spiritual Force.

“In order to understand the great compensations of the Universe, and to comprehend the real loss which more than nullifies any apparent gain which may result from the neglect to correspond with this Force, we must look, not to the material results which may follow from such correspondence (for, as I have said, material good as often as not will *not* result), but at the spiritual results. We must balance the spiritual gains of the man who enters into this correspondence, with the non-spiritual gains of the man who does not. In other words, we must determine the quality of the lives which result from correspondence with these various



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classes of forces—their relative worth, fulness, and satisfyingness.

“But this the Hebrews who grappled with the problem could not do; both because they did not clearly recognize that there were differences in the quality of these results, because of the limitation of their time-view to the present life; and also because of the impossibility (partly owing to this limited time-view, partly to their failure to understand fully the nature of the Spiritual Force) of their clearly distinguishing between the two classes of relations which it is possible for man to sustain to this Force, and indeed to all forces.

“I said at the commencement that the secret of success in all life is to utilize forces; and I have endeavoured to distinguish carefully all along between adjustment to the modes in which forces work, and the utilization of them. Occasionally I have used the word ‘correspond’ to express both these relations.

“Now, this distinction between the adjustment to forces, and their utilization, is an exceedingly important one. Under one or the other of these two kinds of relations with the forces outside it, organized life, of which we have any knowledge, can be ranged. Almost all the relations, however, which all living organisms except man sustain to forces, can be classed under the former term (*i. e.* adjustment). Man alone possesses the power to control and utilize the forces which play around him; or, if some dim shadow of this power seems to appear in some other members of the animal



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kingdom, it is so limited as not for a moment to bear comparison with his.

"We may say, indeed, that it is the possession of this power which constitutes his superiority to all other members of the organic world: in virtue of it he is man, and not merely one variety of the brute creation.

"How he became possessed of this power we do not know, and we are not likely to know. Science has within the last fifty years clearly disclosed the truth that development is the grand characteristic of the scheme of things in the midst of which we find ourselves. But not only is the reason of this hidden from us, but the steps by which the creation has mounted to its present height are as yet almost entirely unknown, and the mists of the future hide those which it has yet to climb.

"Consequently, though it is extremely probable that man, the owner of the highest powers, and the possessor of the most complex organism of which we have any knowledge, is connected by the chain of development with the lowest and simplest organisms; yet not only are we still unable to trace the links of the chain which connects him with the ape and the ascidian, but we are utterly in the dark as to how and when he took that step which differentiated him from all the rest of the brute creation;—that step which placed him in the possession of personality; which enabled him to *live* instead of simply existing; to exercise reason instead of following instinct; which required that he should effect a radical change in

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his relations to forces which he could now not only *adjust himself to*, but *utilize*; and which, moreover, made him conscious of a new Force, to which he could sustain both these relations.

“To trace the steps of this development, however, or to formulate a theory concerning the way in which this last and most important step was taken, is an entirely different thing from recognizing the facts of man’s present relations with the Universe. We can recognize that the facts are such as I have described, without understanding them sufficiently to be able to formulate a theory with regard to the way in which man arrived at his present position. Our ignorance on this latter point in no wise prevents us from recognizing these facts, or from entering into such relations with the Universe as are fitting, in view of their being what they are.

“And that man does possess the power, not only to adjust himself to, but also to utilize forces, is a fact which needs no proof—at least, so far as physical forces are concerned.

“The tremendous change which occurs in the relations of every individual to the Universe when he passes from childhood to manhood; the difference between the painful efforts of the child to conform its motions to the law of gravitation, and the acts of the man, who not only has completed that adjustment, but uses that force to grind his corn and spin his cotton; the difference between the child who painfully learns that fire burns and steam scalds, and the man who, a few years later, uses fire and steam to carry him round

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the world,—is sufficiently obvious, and renders proof unnecessary. Nor is there any need to point out the forms in which these two classes of relations manifest themselves in the region of mind. Instinct in some cases may so nearly approach to reason as to render distinction difficult, but the difference between the highest manifestations of instinct in the lower animals (or even between the thoughts of a child), and the intellectual attainments of a Newton, is evidently so enormous, and, in the latter case, points so clearly to a distinct kind of control over this power, from that which exists in the former, that no evidence for the reality of the distinction need be adduced.\*

“The fact, however, that we can sustain relations of both kinds to the Spiritual Force has been by no means universally acknowledged; indeed, very few have recognized the possibility of accomplishing more than an imperfect adjustment to this Force; they have never got beyond the period of childhood in their relations with it; of utilizing it they have never dreamed. Nevertheless, not only have we ample evidence in history that there have been men—wise men, prophets, seers, saints (the

\* The following note was evidently intended to supplement the above paragraph. It is written across the page of the MS., and I have deciphered it with difficulty:—“Of course, I do not place the manifestations of mind in children on the same level with even the highest manifestations of instinct in the lower animals, but far higher; but in reference to the point I am considering—the utilization of mind force as contrasted with the life of mere adjustment to it—they may, I think, be fairly classed together as coming under the latter head.”

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world has called them by many names)—who have attained to higher and closer relations with the Spiritual Force,—relations which have lifted them above the level of ordinary humanity, and given them higher power and nobler Life; but language itself bears witness to the fact that it is possible for man to sustain to this Force, not only the lower relation of adjustment, but also the higher one of utilization. What other distinction than this is that which is conveyed by the terms ‘morality,’ and ‘religion’? What other distinction than this is it which exists between Jesus’ Gospel of Sonship, and the obedience to ‘Law’ of Judaism,—the fundamental distinction between Mosaism and Christianity, the Old Testament and the New, contrasted again and again by the Apostle Paul in such terms as ‘Law’ and ‘Gospel,’ ‘Slavery’ and ‘Freedom,’ ‘Childhood’ and ‘Manhood,’ ‘Fear’ and ‘Love’?

“Yes, in the language in which from age to age for countless generations man has been storing up a record of his continually enlarging experience of the Universe, we find conclusive evidence of the fact that in all ages, and among all nations, but especially among the Hebrews, and preeminently in that age when the crown and flower of that gifted nation gave expression to those truths, which the world ever since has acknowledged to be the highest and grandest truths of life—in all ages, and among all nations, men (at least, some men) have recognized that higher relations can be sustained by man to that Spiritual Force of which they are conscious, than those of mere obedience to such of its laws as are embodied in morality—that partial

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and unwilling obedience to the imperatives of conscience which is all that most men accord—relations which consist, not in adjustments to it, but in graspings of it, and communings with it, which, indeed, thought cannot fully conceive of, nor language adequately describe, but which fill the heart with peace and joy, and bring the consciousness of rapturous Life.

“However far the majority of men may have been from completing (or even attempting to complete) so much as their adjustment to the Spiritual Force, as it has made itself known to them through the imperatives of the Moral Law, the indisputable fact remains that some have sustained a different relation to it than that of mere obedience to even the highest code of morality—that they have touched a higher Life.

“With the exception of One, they have, indeed, hardly been less conscious of their failure to completely correspond with it than other men; but the world has not failed to recognize that this was owing to the clearness of their apprehension of its awful strength and infinite perfection, which they apprehended, indeed, but strove (in vain, as it seemed to them) to comprehend. That, however, they did not wholly strive in vain is plainly to be seen when we contrast their lives with the lives of the majority of men; and the world has acknowledged their superiority by enrolling their names in the record of its noblest and best.

“They are to be found by all who seek for them in the pages of history; and the secret of their lives may be discovered by all who diligently search for

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it; and let doubters and sceptics sneer as they may, the conviction which every earnest seeker after truth will carry away with him from the study of their lives can never fail to be—

‘I cannot hide that some have striven,  
Achieving calm, to whom was given  
The joy that mixes man with Heaven.’

“Now, though I do not deny that there are not wanting indications that some men before the Christian era, especially some of the Old Testament writers, had advanced beyond the life of mere adjustment to the Spiritual Force to the higher and more satisfying life of correspondence with it (as, for instance, the man who sang, ‘I delight to do Thy will, O my God’), yet none the less is it true that the characteristic feature of the ‘Old Dispensation,’ as it has been called, is that of adjustment simply.

“The devout Hebrew obeyed the will of Jehovah just as it was revealed to him in the Law; often, indeed, finding great satisfaction in so doing, but seldom penetrating to the principle which underlay it; seldom touching that life of intelligent and willing obedience to the Eternal, which He who came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets was the first to proclaim fully and to live.

“For many centuries, indeed, the Hebrew failed to make a clear distinction between the relative value of obedience to the moral part of the code of Law which he accepted as giving expression to the Divine Will, and the ceremonial observances with which it was associated. It was not till the nation had passed its prime that the overwhelming import-



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ance of the former was recognized, and men were found who were bold enough to discount the importance—and even to deny the necessity—of the latter.\*

“Moreover, those who did apprehend the grand truth which the Founder of Christianity was the first to fully unfold, and has been the only One to fully embody in life,—even these came very far short of a full and clear apprehension of it. This arose from the fact that they only imperfectly understood the real nature and character of the Spiritual Force. They apprehended it as just, righteous, and merciful, and in their best moments drew a comparison between it and some of the characteristics which distinguish the parental relationship. Jesus comprehended it as Love, and regarded it as the antitype of all fatherhood. ‘When ye pray say, “Father” ’—a vast step, that, in advance of any conceptions of the Spiritual Force which any of the Old Testament writers had.

“For these reasons, therefore,† the Hebrews could not solve the problem which so perplexed them.

“Their ignorance of the truth of immortality prevented them from extending the compensations of the Universe beyond the present life. Their

\* Cf. Ps. xl. 8; xix. 7-11; xl. 6; li. 16, 17; Isa. ii. 11-17; Ps. ciii. 13; Isa. xlix. 15.

† The reader will observe that my friend has diverged, in the last few pages, from the main line of thought which he has been following, in order to dwell on the distinction which he draws between “adjustment” to forces and their



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failure to distinguish between the different kinds of results which follow from correspondence with the various orders of forces, led them to expect material results to follow on obedience to spiritual laws. And their imperfect apprehension of the nature and character of the Spiritual Force, together with the fact that very few of them had advanced beyond the life of adjustment to its laws, rendered it impossible for them to fully realize that higher Life of correspondence with it which Jesus unfolded—its transcendent worth, and its satisfying sweetness.

“For something more than mere adjustment to forces, whether material or spiritual, man requires in order to find satisfaction for the wants of his nature. This is true of his relations with all forces, but it is most true of his relations with the Spiritual Force.

“Obedience to the Moral Law, regarded simply as Law, can never bring with it a satisfying delight. Virtue is not its own reward. The satisfaction to be derived from conformity to the rules of morality can never fully compensate for the trials and losses which such conformity entails. Man requires, not merely to conform to the forces around him (*i.e.*

“utilization.” He now returns to the point from which he wandered—the reason why the Hebrews who “grappled with the problem” (why Jehovah permitted the wicked to prosper) could not determine “the relative worth and satisfyingness of the lives which result from correspondence with the various classes of forces” which he has distinguished.

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to exist), he requires to apprehend and utilize them (*i.e.* to live). Life alone is the goal of existence; and the final, endless end is that Life which can be won by entering into correspondence with the highest (*i.e.* the Spiritual) Force.

"This the Hebrew did not, indeed, could not know, for the world was not then in possession of the secret. He only tasted the lesser joys which follow from conformity to Law; he hardly touched the higher ones which accompany Life.

"Consequently, he could not rest contented while seeing the wicked prosper, feeling that he was in possession of a greater prosperity and a fuller life. He perplexed his mind with the hopeless problem, why the Eternal permitted such a state of things, and again and again lifted up his passionate cry for justice to the God who all along was just.

"But the centuries which have elapsed since the Book of Job and the Psalms were written have added much to our knowledge of the forces in the midst of whose energizing we find ourselves—of the Spiritual Force as well as of physical ones; and we can now grapple successfully with the problem which baffled them; for us, indeed, it has ceased to be a problem.

"For we know now—thanks to Him whose high claim to complete knowledge of, and full correspondence with, the Spiritual Force, the moving centuries have continually endorsed more and more fully—that we cannot only conform to its laws, but can apprehend it and correspond with it; and, by utilizing the mighty current of its ever-flowing stream, can attain to unimaginable fulness of end-

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less Life. We know now—or we may know, by learning to know and to love the Divine Teacher of Nazareth—that the Spiritual Force is the force of a living Spirit; whose touch to responsive souls is as the touch of a Father's hand; who rewards even the feeblest efforts of our spirits to apprehend and commune with Him with sweet draughts from the river of His pleasures—with Life from the fountain of His Eternal Life; who satisfies our heart's deepest need by permitting us to share in the fellowship of His Love.

“Why this Spiritual Force flows, and from what Source, and why it is what it is, we do not know. We cannot even hazard a conjecture, any more than we can conjecture how physical forces originated. We know concerning the latter that, at least as far as their manifestations in the material universe are concerned, they are transient and not destined to endure; of the former we know nothing beyond the records of the various ways in which it has laid its touch on human souls, and has manifested its presence and its power in human history.

“But the man who has linked himself to it will not disturb himself with such speculations. The fulness and satisfyingness of the life of correspondence with it which he will feel to be his will leave no room for doubt—no room for any other desire than the desire to share more fully in its inexhaustible fulness of Life. He will feel that it is the most fundamental force of which he has any consciousness, and that by correspondence with it he satisfies the most fundamental needs of his nature. He will feel that he is in communion with Life, which is

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above—and which lifts him above—all the mutations of time; which indeed knows nothing of time, but changelessly, eternally *is*.

“And so, for the man who stands there, the problem concerning the prosperity of the wicked, which so perplexed the minds of the Hebrew thinkers, is no insoluble riddle; indeed, it does not present itself to his mind as a problem at all. He feels and knows, by daily and hourly experience—as they, who had hardly got beyond the life of adjustment to it, and who had not grasped the full truth concerning what it is, could not know and feel—the superiority and satisfying sweetness of the life of correspondence with the Spiritual Force. He can look with complaisance—nay, not complaisance, but with pity, and a longing desire to lift them from their low enjoyments, their meagre existence, their fancied prosperity, their blind contentment, to his own full, rapturous life,—he can look thus on those who, ignoring the Spiritual Force, succeed in their schemes of worldly ambition, and get for themselves fame and wealth. They set this end before themselves, and they attain to it, but—he realizes—at a fearful cost. For not only do they miss all the joys of the Eternal Life, but, by thus striving for ends which are not final, they build on a foundation which will not endure, but will crumble beneath them when, by the change of death, they are torn away from all that they prize, and are swept into a new and strange environment. There, too, he knows that they will encounter the Spiritual Force, and will have to face its dread recoil sweeping back upon them with aggravated

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intensity from the hindrances to its flow which their unrighteous lives have caused. And he knows that, if true, Eternal Life is to be theirs, it can only be by their patiently submitting to see all the results, which they have so earnestly striven to achieve, swept away by the avenging Nemesis of this resistless Force; by painfully remodelling their lives so as to offer no further resistance to its sweep; and by entering into that correspondence with it which can alone satisfy all the requirements of their nature, and all its purpose of infinite beneficence. Whether they will achieve this mighty reformation he knows not, though believing—knowing—that the fundamental quality of the Spiritual Force is Love, he can follow them into the unseen world, with the solemn hope that they go to that—

‘ . . . dark, obscure, sequestered place,  
Where God unmakes but to remake the soul,  
Which else were made in vain.’ ”

Among the same manuscripts as those which contain the above I find the following, which, from its position, as well as its tenour, I conclude my friend intended to be a supplement or comment on it. Apparently he wrote it after reading over the above essay. It is worthy of the reader's careful attention, for it forms a link between the notes I have already given and those which follow. It shows (as I hinted at the commencement of this chapter) that the more he thought and wrote on religious subjects the more he became convinced of the inadequacy of scientific terminology to express the truths with which religion deals. After

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reading it we shall not be surprised to find that he resorts more and more to the relations which exist between—and are peculiar to—human beings for illustrations of the relations which exist between the “Spiritual Force” and man; and uses, in his descriptions of the “Life” which results from “correspondence with the Spiritual Environment,” the terms which are exclusively used to describe the feelings, emotions, and affections which are experienced in intercourse between man and man:—

“The astonishing progress which science has made during the present century, and the important part it has played in moulding the life of the age, has naturally had a great influence on men’s thoughts and conceptions of life. There has been a strong tendency to modify these so as to bring them as far as possible into harmony with the new knowledge which science has gained. And in some cases men have been led by the momentum of thought, produced by years of scientific research, to attempt to describe and define all life in terms of science, and have confined themselves (as far as possible, for it is not altogether possible) to the nomenclature which it adopts, and to such analogies and illustrations as are found in the peculiar field in which it works. This is not altogether to be regretted; indeed, if scientists took a complete view of Nature (in which human nature should be included) and of Life, it could not fail to be productive of unmixed good.

“But this hitherto has not been the case. Human nature on its deepest side—Life in those deeper regions of consciousness which have been stirred



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in at least some men—has not yet been worthily studied by scientists.

“Material phenomena have almost exclusively engaged their attention; they have hardly condescended to notice those most varied and most subtle phenomena which are connected with religion.

“I do not doubt that a thorough scientific investigation of the religious experiences of the race—not merely its beliefs and practices, but its *experiences*—will lead to a profound modification of the present attitude of science towards religion.

“But this fact must never be forgotten when we consider the relation of science to religion, and the attempt to define Life in terms of science: phenomena alone come legitimately within the sphere of science; with phenomena alone are the faculties of which science makes use, capable of dealing.

“But phenomena are the appearances of a Something, and faculties are the faculties of a Something—which underlies them, but is not they. What this Something is science can never know. It is beyond the power of faculties to apprehend, it is beyond the range of scientific instruments to discover, it is beyond the capacity of scientific terminology to define, what the Real, the Spiritual—whether it be in man or in the Universe—is. The door of the Real is for ever shut to science. Science can only deal with what appears; and can only describe it in terms of the faculties of which phenomena alone are the proper environment, and with which alone they are capable of corresponding.

“This being so, it follows that all attempts to



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describe and define Life in terms of science,—all attempts to comprehend under scientific methods, and to set forth in scientific language (in a way which can be deemed satisfactory) that which men know and feel Life to be, must be impossible.

“It is the boldest of presumptions, the most outrageous of claims, made in defiance of what is highest and noblest in human nature, to assume that those faculties in man which correspond with phenomena, are adequate to gauge and measure Life and Truth.

“The inadequacy of scientific terminology to express the deepest and most fundamental truths and relations of Life only became fully apparent to me when I made the attempt to express religious truths in these terms. I then found it quite impossible to confine my language to them; they were too cold, hard, heartless; and I rose from the attempt, convinced that we must make use of the terms which describe human relations, and the illustrations and analogies which these supply, in order to adequately express those relations between man and the Non-Ego which are included under the term ‘Religion.’

“I do not object to the use of scientific terminology as far as it is possible to make use of it. Indeed, to reclothe religious truths in such language may be very helpful to some, and may serve a useful purpose in many cases by shaking people out of ruts, and making the truths they profess to hold more real to them. But I do not believe that, in the main, the old way of expressing religious truths can be improved on. The age needs to free

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itself from the bias towards materialism which it has undoubtedly acquired, and to correct the tendency to look at everything in the 'dry light' of science. In order to express adequately those fundamental spiritual relations which man is capable of sustaining with the Universe, a return must be made to the terminology which has the sanction of the ages; a terminology which, while it does not refuse assistance from nature, and material things, and man's relations to them, gets its chief expressions and draws its truest analogies from the relations which are only possible between personalities—between soul and soul, heart and heart.

"The beauty and the sweetness of these relations, and their possibilities, the world will doubtless apprehend with increasing fulness as its development progresses, and man enters more and more into his birthright. And as this advance is made the words expressive of these relations, and the analogies drawn from them, will gain a greater depth and fulness of meaning. But though by this means the terminology of which countless generations have approved as the most fitting in which to express these relations which their spirits can sustain to the Great Spirit will undergo modification, I do not think it possible for any new relations to be discovered through the aid of science, which, because they more adequately express man's fundamental relations with the Non-Ego, will supersede the relations of father and son, husband and wife, the lover and the loved one.

"Therefore, not 'Force' and 'Law,' but 'Father' and 'Love,' must ever remain the truest and the

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most satisfactory terms in which to describe Him who has created us, and in whose presence we for ever stand; Him before whose inexhaustible power, matchless wisdom, and awful beauty, as these are revealed in Nature—our senses are wearied and our minds are filled with speechless wonder; yet are we not therewith satisfied. For that which is deepest in us—the soul—cannot be fed with beauty; nor satisfied with the contemplation— or even with the appropriation—of the unsearchable wisdom and power of the Eternal. It craves for a deeper knowledge, it longs for a fuller communion, than the senses can win or than Nature can give. Only when it has realized that the touch of that which is around it is the touch of a Father's Hand is it soothed into restfulness; only when it has found that GOD IS LOVE can it enter into that fulness of Life which it craves to have and He to bestow."

## CHAPTER V

### RELIGION

The number and the length of the notes which I have found among my friend's manuscripts dealing with the subject of religion shows how often his mind dwelt on this subject. It was, indeed, as will have been gathered from the letter which I have inserted in the Introduction, the subject which chiefly occupied his attention, with a view to writing on which in a connected form he penned the majority of these notes.

From such a wealth of material it has been difficult to make a selection. I have felt compelled to omit many interesting notes, and to confine myself to those which seem most in accord with the aim I have endeavoured to keep before me in this work.

I have been helped by finding three long notes (they might almost be called essays) on Faith, The New Birth, and The Moral Sense. His most suggestive thoughts, and his main conclusions on religion are, I think, to be found in these. I have accordingly embodied them in this and in the two following chapters; and, to give the reader as complete an idea as is possible of the views he adopted on these subjects, I have added a few notes

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which I have found elsewhere among the manuscripts.

### A. FAITH

“All knowledge rests on faith. It is impossible to say ‘I know,’ without also saying, ‘I trust.’

“But knowledge is of two kinds—the results of the exercise of two different parts of our nature on two different modes of the real.

“In the one case the knowledge is intellectual, gained by a trustful exercise of faculties on phenomena; in the other case it is spiritual, gained by the correspondence of spirit with substance. The one cognizes things, the other persons. Our life as intellectual beings is comprised in the one, our life as self-conscious and responsible beings in the other. And as the character of the knowledge is different in the two cases, so is also the character of the faith on which each rests. Both are necessitated, but the necessity is not of the same kind. The possession of self-determination makes a difference in the character of the necessity which belongs to the Spiritual Faith. We cannot think at all without resting on the postulates of our intellectual knowledge; we can live—only not truly—without exercising the spiritual faith.”

[Across the page my friend has written, apparently after reading over this sentence: “And yet I do not know that there is any essential difference in the character of the necessity which attaches to these faiths. We can no more live the spiritual life without exercising the spiritual faith than we can think without resting on the intellectual

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one. What makes it appear as if the necessity were different is that men think they are living when they have not got (*i. e.* do not exercise) the spiritual faith. They call it 'life,' this existence which is all they know about; but it does not deserve the name. They are dead to true Life, and don't know it."]

"The necessity of both these faiths results from our finiteness. It is impossible to conceive of any other basis on which the thinking and living of finite intelligent spirits could be based.

"As finite intelligences, we must sooner or later come to the walls which circumscribe our minds, to the limits of thought, to the primary notions which permit of no analysis. As finite spirits, we must lean on the Infinite Spirit, else were we gods.

"I cannot see that in this necessity there is anything derogatory to human nature—unless, indeed, finiteness itself be a humiliation. Humility, which alone is a fitting posture for the finite to assume in the presence of the Infinite, should lead us quietly to accept and joyfully to live by these conditions, which, had they not been good, the Infinite Wisdom and Love would not have imposed. It is only the pride and wilfulness of ignorance which refuses to stoop to pass through this, the one gate by which alone man can enter into Life.

"But though necessity, resulting from our finiteness, is a characteristic of both the intellectual and the spiritual faith, there are features in which they differ quite as important as this in which they agree.

"For the intellectual faith is a necessity which

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belongs to the organ of thought, mechanical, acted upon, whether recognized or not—the silent, incontrovertible testimony of our minds concerning the limits of their capacity.”

[In brackets my friend writes: “I have often wondered at, and endeavoured (unsuccessfully) to explain, the curious fact that the mind has the power to question the validity and universality of its own *a priori* notions. Why is it possible to question whether  $2+2=4$  universally? Is it the protest of the spirit against the narrowness of the limits within which it is at present confined?”]

“But the spiritual faith is not mechanical, but vital. It pertains not to the organ of thought, but to the personality; not to what man has, but to what he is.

“And as it inheres in a nobler part of man’s nature than the intellectual faith, so are the objects upon which it exercises itself proportionally nobler.

“The spiritual faith does not rest on intuitions, it reposes on living spirits. It is essentially a relationship between personalities, and only between persons can it be displayed.

“If living souls are absent, or if the spirit is not conscious of the presence of the Eternal Spirit, the spiritual faith cannot manifest itself. But granted these conditions, it can energize, and, in energizing, afford a basis for a Life (*i. e.* a correspondence) as boundless as its object,—as limitless as the capacities of the soul towards which it leans.

“The Eternal Spirit—God—is the only object on which the spiritual faith can ultimately rest. For this side of our nature opens out on the Infinite, and



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no finite personality, but only the Great Personality, can meet and satisfy the boundless capacities of the spiritual faith, and the measureless ambition of the spirit of man.

"Therefore, though for a time it may rest on, and content itself with, those imperfect types of the Eternal Spirit which it has relations with in the world, it is bound, sooner or later, to discover their insufficiency. God alone can satisfy the capacities and the needs of man.

"The spiritual faith cannot be described. It is an unique affection of personality, a primary spiritual instinct. It pertains to deep regions of our being, which thought is not competent to fathom, and consequently it defies all attempts to formulate it in mental terms. Hence to apply to it the terms 'affection,' 'instinct,' or 'feeling,' is alike unsatisfactory, for none of these, nor all combined, convey an adequate impression of what it is. It is more an attitude of the Ego—the leaning touch of our spirits on the Real—the nestling of the finite on the bosom of the Infinite. At the same time, the term 'faculty' may be applied to it with propriety, inasmuch as through it we gain the most fundamental knowledge which we are capable of apprehending—the knowledge of God.

"Indeed, though I have called it 'that upon which spiritual knowledge rests,' it contains in itself many of the elements of real knowledge. In these deep regions thought must be content with very imperfect definitions.

"Therefore, though it is idle to dispute about terminology, and I would gladly surrender the

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term 'knowledge' as expressive of this spiritual experience to any one who can furnish me with a better one, I think the term can fairly be applied to the spiritual faith.

"For through it we cognize not merely a fixed relation existing between faculties and phenomena—an order and harmony in these capable of being co-ordinated to an indefinite extent with the order and harmony in those (and this is the best definition I can give of intellectual knowledge), but we recognize a harmony existing between our spirits and the Infinite Spirit, we are conscious of spirit knowing Spirit, Life touching Life, in a way and with a fulness and satisfyingness which our spirits can, indeed, experience, but our intellects can never formulate.

"And the recognition of this unique relationship is accompanied by feelings—by 'knowledge'—equally unique: by a feeling of restful confidence at all times, in all places, and amid all the changing circumstances of life; by a feeling of peace and joy which continually becomes greater as experience confirms and justifies this primary instinct of our spirits; by a conviction of being in harmony with the Heart of things which no mental doubts can shake, and no pain, or sorrow, or adversity can disturb.

"No one who has had these 'feelings' will care to dispute about the words in which thought endeavours to give expression to them. He will recognize the total inadequacy of language to express the fact which he feels and knows. He will feel how poor is all mental imagery to represent this

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spiritual experience. It cannot be described: to be realized it must be spiritually felt.

“There are, indeed, feelings experienced in the relations which men sustain to one another which, inasmuch as they are common to humanity, and are never wholly unknown even to the most debased and degraded of men, can be pointed to as typifying the feelings experienced by those who have attained to the spiritual faith. (I mean that spiritual faith which has made touch with that only Object with which it can have a satisfying correspondence—*i. e.* the Infinite Spirit, God.)

“And seeing that in all languages there are words which express these feelings—words which convey adequate impressions because they are the universally received mental equivalents of these universally experienced feelings—the mind can, by the use of these, to some extent, describe that higher spiritual experience, and convey some notion of it to others.

“But these feelings cannot be regarded as anything but types and shadows of those which are experienced by the man who leans on the Eternal with a living spiritual faith. Sweet and rich in joy as they are when most fully experienced, they, resulting as they do from relations with what is limited and imperfect, cannot convey any adequate idea of experiences which result from relations with the Unlimited and Perfect: the reality cannot be known until it has been actually experienced.

“This difficulty of conveying through language adequate impressions of the spiritual truths she taught and of the spiritual life she revealed, was

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one which Christianity encountered. And it is a difficulty which, so far as I can see, could not have been overcome had not He who first taught these truths *lived* them as well, so that He not only taught the Truth, but was the Truth; not only taught men what Life—true Life—is, but *was* the Life, and thus enabled them to realize and know what would otherwise have been unrealizable and beyond knowledge because beyond the range of experience. It is a difficulty which the Apostle Paul felt when writing about Christianity, and which led him to quote the passage as applying to spiritual experience: ‘things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man; things which God prepared for those who love Him;’ and to say, ‘the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually apprehended;’ and again and again to exhaust language in the endeavour to convey in words adequate impressions of what he, in a way which no words would describe, felt and experienced as a living reality.

“To many, indeed, the language of the Apostle, which I have just quoted, and perhaps my own language in speaking of the spiritual faith, may seem to savour of pride and dogmatism. They certainly will not be readily accepted by that large class of men who are barely, if at all, conscious of spiritual need, who do not know what soul-hunger is.

“‘What,’ they will say, ‘is this spiritual experience of which you talk? We have never experi-

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enced it; we have never had any consciousness of a spiritual faith. What right have you to imply that our being is defective when we feel no sense of defect, to say we are dead when we are conscious of being so much alive?

“With such men argument is useless. As long as they remain in this state of mind the heights of life, which, by the exercise of spiritual faith they can gain, must be for ever beyond their reach, and they must continue to regard them as unsubstantial and visionary.

“For, indeed, to them they are so. What they say is true; they never have seen these heights; they have been unconscious of their existence. However much it may lay one open to the charge of presumption to say so, it must be said, because it is the truth, that spiritually they are blind and dead. They do not exercise their spiritual faculties, and consequently the spiritual world is as completely cut off from them as the intellectual world would be if they absolutely refused to trust the *a priori* notions of the mind; and no words will convince them of its existence, or convey to them any notion of the Life which results from correspondence with it, if they do not exercise those faculties through which alone they can gain ‘knowledge’ of it.

“Such men miss Life; they are without that supreme, ineffable consciousness to which some have attained, to which all may, yes, I believe, all shall, attain finally—the consciousness of quietly trustfully resting on that Eternal Life which is also the Eternal Love.

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“And here a question suggests itself which is one of extreme interest, but also one of considerable difficulty—the question of the relations that exist between the spiritual faith and the intellectual faculties.

“I fully agree with Sir Wm. Hamilton in his statement that ‘the capacity of thought is not to be constituted into the measure of existence, nor the domain of our knowledge recognized as necessarily coextensive with the horizon of our faith;’ and the truth of this statement, and of what I have been saying about the inadequacy of thought to express those states of consciousness which accompany a spiritual faith, receives abundant confirmation, not only from that Book which embodies the highest spiritual experience to which any of our race have attained, but also from the language of the men who in every age have felt most deeply and truly.

Wordsworth sings—

“‘In such high hour  
Of visitation from the Living God  
Thought was not;’

and Tennyson—

“‘If e’er when Faith had fall’n asleep,  
I heard a voice, “Believe no more,”  
And heard an ever-breaking shore  
That tumbled in the Godless deep:

“‘A warmth within the heart would melt  
The freezing reason’s colder part,  
And like a man in wrath the heart  
Stood up and answered, “I have felt.”’



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“These are two very significant restatements of a truth which, though the saints and seers of every age have not failed to give utterance to it, had, and has still, great need to be reasserted in this age, in bold contradiction to the extravagant claims which the mind is making anew, of universal sovereignty over the whole being of man, and over the whole Universe without him.

“But it is one thing to recognize and feel convinced of man’s capability to sustain relations with the Non-Ego deeper and more fundamental than those which legitimately form the subject of mental cognition, and which can be adequately expressed in terms of thought, and quite another to be able to determine the relations which exist between this deeper consciousness and the organ of intelligence, and in terms of the latter to describe them. A satisfactory philosophy of the religious consciousness it is impossible to construct, for by ‘satisfactory philosophy’ we mean an analysis and description of it which satisfies the mind, which, as I have already said, is not capable of comprehending and adequately expressing this affection of man’s being, even when it forms the subject of personal experience, and is totally unable to realize what it is when the being has never been thus affected.

“Nevertheless, it should not be impossible to gain some conception both of the religious consciousness and of its relation to the organ of thought. At any rate, in endeavouring to do so we are only yielding to a natural impulse; indeed, we are compelled to make the attempt. For though thought may not be



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able to 'measure existence,' it is the only line we can throw into the depths; though there are affections of consciousness which take place below the horizon line of cognizable knowledge, their effects are visible above the horizon; though the mind cannot comprehend this consciousness, it can apprehend it,—and, indeed, is bound to apprehend it, inasmuch as all affections of consciousness report themselves to the mind and form the subjects of cognitions: they pass into it, and shape themselves in it—or rather are transmuted by it—into thought-forms. However inadequate the organ of thought may be for the task of gauging consciousness and measuring 'the Real,' it is the only instrument with which we have been furnished for that purpose. Therefore, the attempt to form conceptions of the religious consciousness is a perfectly legitimate one, and we can make it without, on the one hand, falling into the error of supposing that the intellect is master of the spirit, and can comprehend it, and without, on the other hand, entangling ourselves in the errors of mysticism—mysticism which practically refuses to recognize the intellect's capacity to apprehend the affections of the spirit; a refusal which contains a noble assertion of the spirit's superiority, but which involves an undue depreciation of that organ of intelligence with which the spirit of man has been endowed, and by which it is conditioned.

"I have previously stated that there are feelings common to humanity, experienced in the relations which men sustain to one another, which approach nearest to, and will best serve as types of, the feel-

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ings experienced by those who have attained to the spiritual faith; and that in all languages there are words which describe these, and convey an intelligent meaning, because they are the mental equivalents of universally experienced feelings.

“These feelings vary greatly in purity and intensity, and language has many words by which she describes them. In or behind all those which are recognized as noble and right, however, we find the primary attitude of trust—that unique, fundamental affection which is the basis of all right relations between personalities, which, whether you call it a feeling, or an attitude, or a knowledge, is a reality of conscious experience.

“It would take me too far from my present line of thought to show that this is so in the case of all the feelings which men experience in their relations with one another on which the moral judgment can pass sentence of approval, such as esteem, honour, reverence, affection, love—that, indeed, trust is the only possible basis of intercourse between men. What I wish to point out now is that the very language which I have been obliged to use in describing these feelings, and the relation they bear to thought, discloses the difference which exists between them as they are *felt* by the individual and as they are *cognized* by him.

“They can only be cognized when they have previously been felt; we ‘know’ them first by experiencing them; we only recognize them when we shape them to the mind as thought. The true knowledge of them—the true life which we live when we experience them—is that which we have

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when we personally feel them; without this we should be incapable of shaping a single thought about them.

“It is true that inasmuch as the mind is the organ of the spirit, and all communications between personalities have to be conducted through its medium, these feelings themselves cannot be experienced, nor these relations sustained, without its aid. But the intensity of these feelings bears no proportion whatever to the clearness or dimness with which they are cognized; no proportion to intellectual knowledge of the person who arouses them, and no proportion to intellectual culture or the reverse. In these relations between personalities the mind plays only a secondary and intermediate part to the feelings which are experienced—to the life which results. From spirit to spirit, through the minds of each, flashes the influence which is caused by and which produces whole universes of inexpressible emotion—of conscious life; just as through the passive wire is flashed the world-life of continents; and a look, a gesture, or a word can convey depths of meaning which the mind could not express in a lifetime, and could not ‘know’ at all unless the spirit first experienced them.

“What a wealth of affection, of faith, of love, have we not known in some hearts—known, and felt, and rested on, and delighted in—which revealed itself through the senses and intellect, indeed, but came from deep wells of being behind these, and stirred currents of life in us strong and deep out of all proportion to the cognitive value of the signs and words by which they were expressed!

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What close bonds have we not seen or heard of, uniting life with life, heart with heart, productive of a wealth of joy and a fulness of communion which have needed no intellectual culture in order to be experienced, which have not required to be understood in order to be felt, which indeed those of the highest intellectual power have been the first to recognize and acknowledge as inexplicable and incomprehensible!

“These facts of conscious experience sufficiently demonstrate that there are affections of consciousness which, though they are manifested through cognitions, and, when felt, form legitimate subjects of contemplation for the mind, have a deeper source than the mind, and are of a different order from those affections of consciousness to which we ordinarily apply the term ‘knowledge.’

“They occur in deep regions of our being, which the light of the intellect cannot illumine; they pertain to that central essence of man which philosophy can never define, which thought can never gauge, on the capabilities of which it is presumptuous for the mind to pronounce an opinion. What depths it contains, what fulness of life it makes man conscious of when it is roused to activity, can be partially understood from those feelings (I use the word for want of a better one) which results from true relations between human beings—those sweet, sympathetic vibrations between spirits consciously in harmony, when tone answers to tone, and chord to chord, through all the unfathomable depths of conscious life. But it was left for One to reveal all its grandeur, and all

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the infinite fulness of life to which the possession of it makes us heirs—One who proclaimed the good news that sonship with the Eternal is our birthright, and who in His own life showed us what that Life of Sonship is. 'Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ'—that alone adequately describes the capacities of consciousness, that alone adequately defines the nobility of man; though He who was the First-born still towers above all His brethren—matchless, our divinest symbol—the one Man who is worthy of the title 'Son of God.'

"Now, what I have just said with regard to the part the mind plays in those most fundamental relations which men can have with one another, is equally true of the relations which they can sustain with the Eternal Spirit. In so far as a man has experienced the sweetness of these human relations, to that extent is he supplied with a standard which he can employ to measure the heights and depths of the spiritual life. The words in which these relations are expressed will have a fulness of meaning proportionate to the fulness with which he has entered into the relations themselves. And inasmuch as, even in these human relations, the limits of the life which they produce can never be determined, and that which has been experienced stretches far beyond the limits of thought and of language; and seeing that, as I have already said, these can only be regarded as types of the relations which can be sustained with the Eternal Spirit, when a spiritual faith has been won, it is evident that it is impossible for the intellect to comprehend the spiritual consciousness. It can at best only partially appre-

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hend and imperfectly express in types and metaphors those deep incomprehensible stirrings of consciousness which thrill the being of Him who 'dwells in the secret place of the Most High,' who has entered into communion with the Infinite Love.

"The world has an imperishable memorial of what language is capable of doing in this direction in the Psalms of the Hebrew nation—the Hebrew nation which (surely the fact is a very significant one) had no philosophy. The representations of spiritual experience which these contain are unsurpassable, or, at any rate, have never been surpassed. A sufficient proof of their sublimity is to be found in the fact that the world for more than two thousand years has deemed them adequate for the expression of its spiritual feelings. Though in countless tones in every age, men have endeavoured to express in language the music of their hearts, no fuller, sweeter, richer notes have ever been struck than those which were struck from the lyre of the Hebrew Psalmists; men have continually returned to them, and ever found in them new depths of meaning corresponding to each new and deeper stirring of their own spiritual consciousness.

"And yet who will be bold enough to say that the Psalms, unrivalled as they undoubtedly are as expressions of spiritual feeling, adequately express the soul-life of those who wrote them? What depths of inexpressible emotion lie behind these outpourings! What fulness of spiritual life do they hint at, but leave undescribed! And necessarily so; for the notes of human speech tremble into silence long before the highest heights of feeling are



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reached, long before the fulness of the spiritual life can be expressed. Man's spirit and the Eternal Spirit meet and mingle in a fellowship and communion too deep, too awful, for language to express or for thought to comprehend,—a communion of which silence is more expressive than speech, and the motionless lips than torrents of song.\*

"I have, in what I have written in the previous pages, been led to say more concerning the results

\*In Dr. Channing's discourse on "The Perfecting Power of Religion" there is a passage so singularly in harmony with the convictions my friend gave expression to in the above note, that I venture to quote it—

"Again, I particularly intended to show that religion is a source of light to the intellect by opening to it the highest order of truths, and thus introducing it to a celestial happiness. On this topic it might not be easy to avoid the charge of mysticism. I believe, however, that the highest truths are not those which we learn from abroad. No outward teaching can bestow them. They are unfolded from within by our very progress in the religious life. New ideas of perfection, new convictions of immortality, a new consciousness of God, a new perception of our spiritual nature, come to us as revelations, and open upon us with a splendour which belongs not to this world. Thus we gain the power to look with deeper penetration into human life, as well as into the universe. We read a wider significance into events. We attain to glimpses of the Infinite Mind and of a future world which, though we may not be able to define them in human speech, we yet know to correspond to realities. Now, this higher wisdom, whereby the intellect anticipates the bright visions which await it in another life, comes only from the growth and dominant influence of the religious principle by which we become transformed more and more into the likeness of God."—Channing, "The Perfect Life."



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which follow on the possession of the spiritual faith—the outcome of it—than about the faith itself. And necessarily so. For if these results can be only imperfectly apprehended by the mind and expressed in language; if those deep emotions of the spirit which follow on the exercise of this primary spiritual instinct only send reflections above the horizon which bounds our intellectual knowledge, and defy all efforts of the Mind to bring them within the range of her direct vision, and to embody them in forms of thought,—much more must that on which these rest be beyond the power of the mind to understand, beyond the power of thought to conceive—a fact of conscious life defying comprehension or analysis; mysterious, undefinable, inscrutable.

“That it has been a reality in the conscious experience of some, the results which it has produced in our lives abundantly show. But the impossibility of arriving at satisfactory conceptions concerning even the faith which men daily exercise in their dealings with each other—that faith or trust without which intercourse and fellowship between man and man is impossible\*—is sufficient to show the impossibility of comprehending what it is in its fulness, when the relationship is not between two finite beings, but between the spirit of man and the Infinite Spirit.

“And yet we all ‘know,’ to some extent, at any rate, what that faith in man is, though we cannot

\* “Which, as I have said, lies at the back of all those relations which are recognized as noble and right—all on which the moral judgment can pass sentence of approval.”

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explain it. For, consciously or unconsciously, it constitutes the basis of all our relations with one another; and we all, though in very varying degrees, have a share in the life which is founded on it. And I think, if the matter is carefully investigated, it will be found that life has joy and peace and fulness exactly proportionate to the amount of faith which a man exercises. It is those who walk trustfully among their fellow-men who meet with the fullest sympathy from them, and have the fullest communion with them. It is those who share most fully in the joys and sorrows of others, who catch the deepest tones from their hearts—in a word, live the fullest life. Distrust and suspicion raise a wall of separation between a man and his fellows, and cut him off from the life which intercourse with them brings.

“And though I have called this faith which we repose on one another only a type of the spiritual faith, because the one has relation to finite beings and the other to the Infinite Being, yet, as I have hinted before, in their nature they do not essentially differ. The possibilities of life which lie before the man who has attained to the latter must, of course, be infinitely greater than those which can be reached by the man who rests contented with the former. And not only life’s possibilities, but also its security and changelessness. For human affections fail, and human hearts grow cold, and, even when they do not, cruel death or iron necessity often steps between and leave the soul desolate and lonely, with a heart-hunger which seeks in vain for satisfaction throughout the whole range of created things. But

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the life which results from the spiritual faith is incapable of blight or diminution, and in undiminishable sweetness endures through all the shocks of time, and passes unscathed through the portals of death. For it rests on what eternally, unchangeably *is*—on the ultimate Fact of Facts, on that eternal 'Energy of Love,' which is the incomprehensible, unfathomable Source and Fountain of Life.

"Nevertheless, though there is this immense difference between the two in their outcome and results, I am convinced that it is the same God-given capacity which reaches out to, and unites us with human hearts, and which reaches out to and links us with unseverable bonds to the Heart of the Eternal. And who can wonder that often the fulness of the life and the joy resulting from the exercise of this Divine faculty on finite beings blinds men to the higher life and higher bliss which result from its exercise on the Infinite One? Who can wonder that in a world so rich in possibilities of life so many men miss its deeper meanings, and strive to satisfy their infinite cravings with the apparently inexhaustible wealth of human intercourse and affection? Let us be thankful, therefore, that Heaven will not permit man thus to barter away his birth-right—thus unambitiously to content himself with a lesser fulness of life than that for which he is destined. Let us be thankful that in the steady course of its wise and loving dealings with him Heaven does not shrink from sending man the sharpest shocks of pain and sorrow and woe, to remind him of the transitoriness of all earthly relations, and to awaken him to those higher possibilities of life

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which have been placed within his reach;—placing before him also, at the termination of a short uncertain cycle of years, the great change and mystery of death, when the net results of his living can be—must be—summed up, and the account rendered; when his relations with the Universe must be readjusted, and he is enabled—nay, compelled—to see clearly how far he has been resting his life on that which is transitory and ephemeral, and how far on the Eternal and Imperishable.”

The following note is closely related to the above, and forms an appropriate sequel to it. It was, I surmise, written about the same time, since it bears traces of the same line of thought:

“It is exceedingly difficult to determine the exact proportion in which intellectual elements combine with faith, either in the relations which men hold with one another, or in those which they sustain with the Eternal. Probably they vary in the case of every individual. There seems to be no fixed relation between intellectual capacity and spirituality—between power of thinking, and power of trusting and loving.

“Consequently, both the grounds of belief, and its quality, vary almost infinitely. Some men are contented to base their faith—whether in their fellow-men or in the Eternal—on grounds which to others seem entirely inadequate; and it is not uncommon to find a large amount of intellectual belief combined with a very small proportion of real spiritual faith; as well as to find a large heart resting satisfied with an exceedingly meagre creed.

“It is interesting and instructive to note the fluc-

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tuating relations which these two factors of man's being—the intellect and the heart—have sustained to one another at various periods in the history of the Christian Church.

“It is a subject which is well worthy of a close consideration, and one to which, I think, sufficient attention has not yet been paid. How the faith which the early Christians reposed in their Master—a faith which was a heart-trust, resulting from personal acquaintance with Him or with those who had thus known Him and caught His spirit, and which had not taken, because it as yet had no need of, a definite intellectual form;—how this faith, as time went on, and those who had actually known the Master passed away, and the Churches they had founded lost the strength and purity of their first love, began to need and gradually acquired for itself a body to dwell in, words to express it, a formulated creed to enshrine it. How for centuries men wrangled and disputed over the question what this form should be,—in what intellectual terms the spiritual truths of Christianity should be expressed. How, meanwhile, and of necessity, the relative importance of these truths, and of the intellectual forms by which they were expressed was almost wholly lost sight of, so that ‘to believe’ came to mean to accept, and be in mental agreement with a certain system of theological thought, instead of to have a living spiritual faith in a Living Spirit. How for centuries the whole of Christendom stagnated under this system, until at length the inconsistency between profession and practice which it permitted and even encouraged, became too glaring

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to be tolerated, and the reawakening intellectual life of Europe burst it into a hundred fragments. How even then the right relations between an intellectual belief and a spiritual faith remained undiscovered, and each rival school and sect set up that very same claim to infallibility which they denied to the Church of Rome. How it has only been in our times that this discovery of the true relations and relative importance of these two has been made, and the Church has begun to esteem rightness of life more highly than correctness of thought, and to separate the true elements of a spiritual life from the intellectual framework in which they are enclosed.

“Of course, throughout the whole of this time many different degrees of spiritual life have been possessed by the individuals who subscribed to, and who helped to make, the creeds of the Church. And though, broadly speaking, it will be, perhaps, correct to say that the creed, and the life of those who professed it, bore a certain relationship to one another—that the lowest state of morals corresponded with the most elaborate and most dogmatic expression of belief—yet to this rule there have been doubtless many exceptions.

“There is, indeed, a vast difference between the creed of the Apostle John—that pure expression of a lofty, spiritual faith in which the intellect never dominates the spirit, but is always its servant, and plastic in its hands to body forth its glowing life—and the hard, cold creed of Calvinism, in which the head gives its assent to conclusions from which the heart revolts, and the natural instincts of the spirit have to fight for life against the loveless demon-



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strations of a ruthless logic. And yet hearts as loving and tender nourished themselves on that creed—nay, not nourished, that is saying too much, but let us say ‘kept themselves in life under it’—as any of the Christian centuries have seen. Only, one cannot help thinking of what they might have been if John’s unfettered creed had been theirs, instead of that cramping one which their hearts secretly protested against, but their intellects felt compelled to accept.

“The distinction between form and substance—thought and life—which, as I have said, has within the last century begun to be recognized, is one of the most hopeful signs of our times. It is a distinct return to truth—to the Real. It is a renewed indication that *that* is what will alone satisfy man—that, not any shadow or even any reflection of it; nor any distorted image of it which may loom upon him through the mists of the ages. It shows that the forces in human nature which tend towards health and growth are still strong—still sufficiently powerful to master those which tend towards decay and corruption.

“Much yet remains to be done before this new age fashions for itself an adequate creed—a creed which ignores none of the precious truths which belong to it as the heir of all the ages, but which expresses these in such forms as the knowledge and enlightenment of the age require, and thus enables men to bring their knowledge and their beliefs into harmony,—to make the confession of the lips a true expression of the convictions of the heart.

“But meanwhile we can be thankful that in a



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period of transition like the present, in which the old and the new have not yet blended, men are beginning to recognize that neither the largeness nor the smallness of a man's creed is any true indication of the amount of spiritual life which he possesses. To express no more and no less than their true and fundamental convictions in their professed creed—their own convictions concerning life, and the great All, as distinguished from their opinions, and their inherited or acquired notions—that, in these days, is for most men a well-nigh impossible task. The mind is, on the one hand, hampered by old formulas and conceptions which belong to outworn ideas and obsolete modes of thought, and on the other it is perplexed by the new knowledge which has burst in upon the age, and the new views of life and of the Universe which have been unfolded.

“In such a condition of things it is very necessary, both in forming our judgments of others, and in endeavouring to arrive at Truth ourselves, to make appeal from the head to the heart—from the perplexities and inconsistencies of thought to the purity of deeds and motives. And though I am far from saying that thoughts and conceptions have no influence on a man's faith, yet, in judging of his spirituality, we are far more likely to judge truly if we judge by what he *does*, than if we judge by what he *thinks*; his life will show what his thoughts may only very imperfectly express, or may even conceal. And our intellectual perplexities are bound sooner or later either to disappear, or to cease to trouble us, if in our actions we permit ourselves to be guided by those spiritual instincts which,

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in whispered clearness, do not fail to voice themselves through all the tumultuous agitations of thought—those spiritual instincts which most assuredly will lead the man who takes them as his guides to the clearness of spiritual knowledge, to the restfulness of spiritual trust.”

I am tempted to linger among these notes on faith and its relation to the intellectual faculties, for it was a subject which greatly interested my friend, and I have found many jottings bearing either directly or indirectly upon it among his manuscripts. I should, however, unduly expand this chapter if I inserted them, and should leave no room for others which have an equal claim on the attention of the reader.

I cannot, however, refrain from inserting one or two shorter ones, in which some further results of his thinking on the subject are characteristically expressed—

“How foolish,” he writes in one of his notebooks, “to make assent to an elaborate system of theology, including metaphysical questions of the greatest difficulty, and on which men not trained in metaphysics are entirely incompetent to pronounce an opinion, necessary to ‘salvation!’

“And yet this is what the Christian Church has been doing more or less all through the centuries. Probably she would not acknowledge it,—at any rate, not when stated in this bald way. Yet there is not one out of every thousand of her leaders, even in the present day, to whatever Church or school he may belong, who does not consider it necessary for men to hold some particular ‘view’ of the Atone-

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ment, or of the Person of Christ, before they can be 'saved.'

"When will her teachers come to see that Unitarianism and Trinitarianism, Calvinism and Arminianism, Comteism and Agnosticism, are all true—and all false; true, inasmuch as they are intellectual statements of facts; false, inasmuch as they only imperfectly express them—imperfectly and disproportionately, giving only marred reflections of parts and sides of Truth; none mirroring faithfully the whole?

"I am convinced that the divergences of thought which these 'isms' manifest are due much more largely to differences of mental constitution than to differences of spirituality, and that no man has any right to say—at any rate, until he has given the subject much more attention than the majority of men give to it—that his system of thought contains a fuller expression of truth than his neighbor's. Perhaps it does from his point of view, and perhaps—indeed, most likely—his neighbour's way of thinking appears to him exceedingly unsatisfactory; but probably this is due more to his inability to look at things from more than one standpoint, or to take a broad view of them, than to any real inferiority of his neighbour's system of thought to his own.

"The more a man truly knows about the fundamental truths of life, the more truth will he see in all systems of thought,—and the less contented will he be with any of them. I am far from saying that all are equally true. On the contrary, I am convinced that some embody, and are capable of hold-

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ing—if I may use the expression—far more truth than others. Some are cramping and warping to a degree, and if held consistently (thank Heaven, the majority of men do not attempt to live consistently by the systems of thought which they so tenaciously uphold in theory) would produce most disastrous results; while others contain a very fairly satisfactory statement of the main truths of life. But Truth is infinite, and all intellectual statements of it must fall infinitely short of the reality,—just as all art falls infinitely short of nature, and no painting can contain a perfect expression of all nature's truths, but at best only of a few, and can represent these only faintly and imperfectly. Inasmuch as good men have found it possible to live noble lives under systems of thought which seem to me woefully poor and inadequate, I have learned to be extremely careful about the judgments I pronounce on these. For aught I know they may be glorious renderings of Truth's infinite majesty, unfoldings of her beauty which I am only prevented from seeing by my own blindness.

“We may depend upon it that no honestly expressed thought, no sincerely held conviction, is devoid of truth and beauty. It may be—it must be—partial, one-sided, incomplete; but even *so* does the Infinite appear to the man who thinks and believes thus;—surely not without profit to all who will earnestly endeavour to understand him.”

“Faith is that fundamental affection of personality on which are based all its relations with other personalities. Creeds are the intellectual forms in which this affection is expressed when relations have been

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established between the soul and the Great Personality. They are of value to a man just to the extent to which they express the recognized and accepted axioms with which a man works in trying to maintain this relationship.

“Of course, these axioms may be very incomplete; they may not set forth more than a few of the truths on which the science of life, *i. e.* of correspondence with the Eternal, must be built; in which case even the man who has the firmest grasp of them, and the strongest desire to live by them, may only be able to rear a very imperfect edifice of life upon them. Or they may be fairly complete, but only partially recognized and lived by (even though most strenuously professed), in which case there must be glaring discrepancies apparent between a man’s professed creed and his working axioms. In both cases it is possible to hold these axioms with very different degrees of firmness, and consequently to attain to varying fulness of life.

“The former condition of things (*i. e.* that of having the axioms of the science of life incomplete) was that under which men lived before Christianity came to the world. Men in those times did not know all the truth which it is necessary to know before the fullest and deepest correspondence between man and the Eternal can become possible. Their knowledge of the fundamental characteristics of the Great Personality was imperfect. Consequently (for the two go together), their knowledge of the axioms it is necessary to formulate—the conditions it is necessary to comply with—before men

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can attain to the greatest degree of correspondence with the Great Personality, was also imperfect.

“The literature of the Hebrew nation contains ample records of the fact that, even when knowledge is imperfect, a marvellous fulness of life can still be gained by effecting this correspondence.

“With regard to correspondence between finite personalities—*i. e.* right and full relations between man and man—the Hebrew, though he saw a good way, never attained to cosmopolitan ideas. Indeed, no nation of the ancient world succeeded in extending its ideas on this subject beyond the limits of its own country and race. The Hebrew knew that justice and mercy were the axioms by which he should work in his dealings with his fellow-men; but he only very imperfectly recognized that he should work with them in his intercourse with the ‘uncircumcised,’ even as the Greeks only imperfectly recognized the necessity of regulating their conduct by these axioms when dealing with ‘barbarians,’ and the Romans did not regard the nations they conquered as worthy of the rights of citizenship.

“An impartial examination of the state of things which prevailed before the coming of Jesus Christ leads to the conclusion that the working axioms of faith were very incomplete even in the case of those who had attained to the greatest degree of enlightenment. Recognizing this, we cannot fail to be impressed by the marvellous advance which was made by the Great Teacher of Nazareth when He summed up and comprehended all axioms concerning the Great Personality by proclaiming His Fatherhood and love, and supplemented this teach-



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ing by the necessary corollary of the universal brotherhood of man.

"So great is this advance; so entirely sufficient and trustworthy have these axioms of faith proved themselves to be for all correspondence which men can effect with other personalities; so impossible is it to conceive of any right relationship for which they do not afford a sufficient basis,—that we are, I think, compelled to regard them as final and ultimate formulations of Truth. The realization of what is involved in them—the attaining to the fulness of Life which it is possible to gain by entering into that fulness of correspondence to which they open the way—it will take the world a long time to accomplish; indeed, in all probability it will for ever remain a delightful impossibility to exhaust their possibilities. But I can conceive of, and I want, no fuller or broader working axioms for faith than these."

"To what extent is it helpful and beneficial to men to subscribe to a creed which formulates truths they have never realized? Is it to any extent advantageous for them to give a nominal assent to a full and clear statement of what I have called 'the axioms of faith,' when the true import of these axioms is not understood, when the life is regulated by very different axioms?

"Here, for instance, is the axiom, 'God is Love.' It has been before the eyes of Christendom ever since the New Testament was written, and has been nominally accepted as an axiom by all professing Christians. But all the time the vast majority of them have based both their lives and their the-



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ology on the far shallower and less comprehensive axioms of God's justice and righteousness—axioms which the Hebrews had formulated long before Jesus Christ appeared.

"Probably truths, like seeds, require time to germinate, and must be planted and lie hidden long before they can begin to influence the world. The world has always been ages behind its greatest men. What Christendom has been doing up to the present time has been to realize and to incorporate in life the axioms of Hebraism rather than those of Christ. Only the choicest souls have hitherto realized the latter. Only now, in this present age, do we begin to see the truths which the lonely Christ dropped into the soil of human nature, beginning to germinate—beginning to influence not merely individuals, but whole classes of society, and nations in their relations with one another. So long has it taken for the heaven to work.

"Most likely (to return to my question) the profession of unapprehended axioms is beneficial on the whole. For if they were not professed they might be lost, whereas by being kept in view they are apprehended by some, and probably do not fail to exercise some influence even on those who do not grasp their meaning, or realize their true bearing on life.

"And doubtless their influence would be more purely beneficial if professions of belief were confined to axioms, and the simple facts which have led men to accept them, and were not expanded into deductions from these, which leave an open door for

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endless differences of opinion, and consequently for endless divisions and strifes.

“What a man’s real working creed is, and how far it approximates to the one he professes—the creed which the wisdom and experience of ages has elaborated—depends on many things;—chiefly, perhaps, on soul-capacity, which seems to vary as much as mental capacity. For undoubtedly there are many degrees of natural capacity for loving and trusting. It depends also upon a man’s environment—especially upon the degree in which he has had experience of (I mean, has come in contact with) lives based on fundamental faith-axioms. The quality of the lives of his parents is undoubtedly the most important factor in this respect.”

I have only given a small portion of the notes on the subject of Faith, or topics closely related to it, which I have found among my friend’s manuscripts, but the limits of my space will not permit the insertion of more.

I will proceed to give now his most suggestive notes on the subject of Conversion.

## CHAPTER VI

### RELIGION—(*continued*)

#### B. CONVERSION

"I HAVE long been convinced (I think I have put down my ideas about it somewhere)\* that the possession of personality by man involves the consciousness of an environment of a corresponding order *i. e.* that his consciousness of self makes him conscious of a Not-Self (a *Living* Not-Self, necessarily, because the consciousness of self is the consciousness of being alive), in whose presence he unceasingly is."

[Across the page my friend has written, "What, it may be asked, of those philosophers who deny personality to God? are they denying their own consciousness?" I must unhesitatingly reply, "Yes." I believe the acknowledgment that a Living Not-Self "besets us behind and before, and lays His hand upon us," will always be made by the man who has a true self-knowledge. At the same time, since undoubtedly this consciousness of being in touch with a Living Not-Self has many degrees, and in not a few—perhaps we ought to say in the

\*I do not know to which of his notes my friend specially refers; the reader will remember several allusions to the subject in those I have embodied in the previous chapters.

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majority—of cases is exceedingly faint, it is not surprising to find that it is sometimes overlooked—especially when the mind is biased by a preconceived notion on the subject.”]

“I am further convinced that man’s consciousness of will-power makes him conscious that this Living Not-Self energizes in constant and definite ways, and consequently requires him to exercise his power of self-determination similarly. ▸

“Or, to state the fact in other terms—man, as a spirit, is conscious of Spirit overarching his spirit; conscious of Being environing his being; conscious of a Reality without him corresponding to what is most real within him—Spirit, Being, Reality, which has *Character*, and which requires him to be what it is, to act in ways harmonizing with its character.

“But *consciousness* has many degrees. How deeply it can be stirred, what possibilities lie hidden in it, to what fulness of life the possession of it may enable us to attain, who will dare to say?

“Likewise knowledge has many degrees. It may be imperfect, apprehending only characteristics which are more or less superficial; if it penetrate to fundamentals, it may have many degrees of *fulness*. Can we say that we fully know anything or any person, even when we have penetrated to characteristics which we are convinced are primary and fundamental? Nay, we only then have found a basis on which a firm superstructure of continually expanding knowledge can be reared.

“Now, in saying that a man, owing to the possession of personality, is conscious of a Not-Self who has character (*i. e.* exercises will-power in constant

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ways), we do not commit ourselves to any definite pronouncement concerning this character—any dogmatic statement concerning the amount of the knowledge which man has of the ways in which the Not-Self energizes.

“We are left quite free to appeal to the facts of human experience for information as to what, at any time, or in any individual, this consciousness,

“These questions have suggested themselves to me while pondering over the subject of conversion, and I have come to the conclusion that in most men not the depths, but only the shallows of consciousness in regard to the Eternal are stirred; that the knowledge of Him which the majority possess is partial and incomplete; that most men never attain to true manhood, never enter into their birthright; never gain that fulness of Life which is possible to or this knowledge, has been or is.

“What are the facts? To what depths of consciousness of the Non-Ego—of the Eternal Spirit—do men ordinarily attain? To what completeness and fulness of knowledge concerning His character do they ordinarily reach? and to what completeness and fulness *can* they reach?

them. What the Great Teacher called the ‘new birth’ is never undergone by them. They remain on far inferior levels of life, in the mists of the valleys, never mounting to the clear sunshine of the heights—either breathing the foul air and suffering from the agues and fevers of selfishness, or, at best, toiling along the rough and cheerless way of duty uninspired by affection, and conscientiousness unilluminated by love.

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“I am going here to put down the reasons which have led me to this conclusion. I shall endeavour to state as clearly and faithfully as possible the facts concerning the consciousness of the knowledge of the Eternal which most men have, as far as I have been able to ascertain them; and then to see what light they throw on the mystery of the ‘new birth.’

“When a child first wakes to conscious life, the degree of consciousness which he possesses is very inferior to that possessed by a full-grown man. All his faculties and powers, though present, are undeveloped. Only gradually do they unfold bringing him continually into fuller relations with the world without him; placing him in possession of a continually increasing measure of conscious life.

“Under ordinary circumstances this development (which, though not exclusively confined to the child’s physical and intellectual faculties, is at any rate much more marked in them than in the moral and affectional parts of his nature) proceeds slowly, and by almost imperceptible transitions, for the first twelve or fifteen years of his life. During this time he continues to be in a more or less dependent condition, not usually having full liberty to act for himself, but being guided and restrained by his parents, or those to whose care they have entrusted him.

“Though the development of a child’s physical and intellectual faculties is more marked than that of the other parts of his nature, nevertheless the influence of the moral training which he undergoes, and of the moral and affectional atmosphere which he breathes, produces in the end even more important effects than his physical and intellectual de-



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velopment and training. Only, for the first twelve or fifteen years of his life, this moral training is almost passively received, this moral and affectional atmosphere is unquestioningly breathed. His parents' (or teachers') actions are the standards of right action; his parents' moral and religious ideas are the standards of Truth. He has no independent ideas (I am speaking broadly; of course, there are many exceptions), no independent convictions; his virtues are imitative or instinctive, as are also his faults—due chiefly to inherited tendencies, yielded to or acted upon without premeditation; and to habits acquired by observation of others; not the outcome of volitions which have the sanction of an independent judgment.

“At the end of this period, however, a change takes place—both a change in his physical constitution, and a still greater one in his thoughts and feelings. The two are probably closely connected, and have mutual and far-reaching relations, which I do not enter upon now. However, in his physical constitution, a change occurs which has not inappropriately been compared to the adding of an entirely new range of stops to an organ; and this, which completes the development of that part of his nature, and makes him a man in body, is accompanied—or quickly followed—by a change in himself, and in the relations he sustains to those who, up to this time, have guided and controlled him.

“For whereas he hitherto has been dependent on them, and has looked to them both for physical support and for intellectual and moral guidance, he now begins to work, to act, and to think for himself. He

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comes into possession of himself, and enters upon the duties and responsibilities of manhood. He no longer unhesitatingly accepts the explanations and ideas of others; he begins to question, to ponder, to argue. His moral ideal ceases to be merely the resultant of the instruction and the example of his parents and teachers; he begins to develop one of his own, to which he makes appeal even from those whom he loves and trusts most. He no longer refers to *them* as the authoritative source of the rules and commandments to which he feels that he ought to—and, to a greater or less extent, does—yield obedience; he looks beyond them to Him whom he has been taught to call 'God'; to whom he transfers that obedience which he has previously given to them.

"And not only the obedience, but also the affection and love. At least he *should* transfer these; or rather, not so much transfer, as supplement them by a higher affection and love given to the Eternal;—not loving and honouring his parents less, but finding in the Antitype satisfaction for those needs of his expanding nature which the type now fails to satisfy completely.

"But this final stage of development the majority never reach. Nay, the majority of men can hardly be said to reach that far lower one of obedience to acknowledged laws and commandments.

"The subject becomes complicated here, and it is difficult to sketch general features without appearing to ignore important exceptions; but the immense majority of men may, I think, after they

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have arrived at manhood, be classed under the following two heads:—

“1. Those who in their actions are mainly guided by selfish considerations.

“2. Those who endeavour, more or less strenuously, to regulate their actions by law.

“1. The majority of men, when they assume the management of their own lives, practically live for themselves. Of course, there are many degrees of selfishness; and many modifying influences are at work to hinder the full carrying out of this principle, and to disguise it, even to the individuals themselves. Few men, if any, entirely stifle their natural promptings to unselfish action, or will refuse to let these sometimes influence them, even when they hinder the carrying out of their own selfish plans. Few men entirely shake off the influences of early moral training. To meet with selfishness in its most glaring and brazenfaced forms is rare. Most men would prefer rather to inconvenience themselves a little than to do some act of gross injustice, involving pain and sorrow to their fellow-men.

“Nevertheless, in spite of this inclination to avoid the extreme claims of this principle by which they live, selfishness is their animating and controlling motive. Their own interests, their own aims, their own pleasures, are their chief concern. They allow neither the laws of God nor the feelings of their fellow-men to deter them when some selfish desire craves to be gratified, or some selfish end is to be reached.

“2. But a large number of men are influenced in their actions by other considerations. They ad-

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mit the validity of the voice of conscience; and the authority of the imperatives of the moral Law; and they endeavour, with greater or less consistency and earnestness, to live by them.

“No clear line can be drawn between this class and those who regulate their lives by selfish motives—the one shades off into the other by imperceptible degrees. At the same time, the two classes are distinct; and a marked difference is to be observed between the lives of those who can be taken as fair types of the former and those who may be considered average representatives of the latter. For men who belong to this class are prevented by the Moral Law, to which they own obedience, from falling into the lowest depths of selfishness; and often, when they have a clear recognition of the obligations it imposes on them, and a firm desire to conform to them, they present to the world high examples of integrity and uprightness.

“It will be found, I think, that all who belong to this class have been either favoured with exceptionally moral surroundings in their early days, or possess (whether through heredity or otherwise, we need not now inquire), a certain bias towards virtue. Generally both these influences have been at work. Be that as it may, the fact remains that they acknowledge the supremacy of a moral Ideal, and are disposed with more or less earnestness to conform their lives to it.

“And this suggests an important question, a clear answer to which will throw a great deal of light on Conversion. Whence do men get their conceptions of God, and of the contents of the Moral Law?

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“The relations between men’s convictions concerning the Moral Law, and their conceptions regarding God’s character, must, I think, possess a certain degree of harmony; but very often their professed conceptions of His character, and their conceptions concerning His moral government, show a very marked inconsistency. Whether this is owing to the fact that they do not understand the real meaning of the terms they use, because they have never experienced (or only very partially and imperfectly) the facts of conscious life which they describe, is an interesting question, which I must some time consider.\*

“I have said that when a child emerges into manhood, he no longer tacitly accepts the moral Ideal presented to him by his friends and teachers. He has developed one of his own, with which he compares, and if necessary judges, the precepts and the actions even of those who are nearest and dearest to him. How does he come by this independent ideal?

“I have also said that he transfers—or should transfer—the obedience he renders to his parents, to the Supreme Being; or, at any rate, supplements the former obedience by the latter. Whence does he get his conceptions concerning this Supreme Being?

“To these questions, I think only one answer is possible; he derives them from others—from experience.

“I do not want here to discuss the nature of con-

\* The reader will remember that a note which I have given touches on this question.

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science ; I will only say that, however much I should like to believe that the spirit (the personality) has clear, original impressions concerning the character of the Great Spirit, and concerning the Moral Law implanted in it from birth (beyond those which are due to heredity), I am compelled to admit that all facts go to show that (before the New Birth takes place) a man's entire knowledge of God, and of the Moral Law, is derived from those with whom he is associated (either living persons or writers in books) : no other forms do his conceptions of God take, no other ideas has he about morality, than those he has thus obtained. This alone will account for the immense number of variations in the quality of moral ideas, and in the clearness of conceptions concerning the Great Spirit, which have occurred, and do still occur, in various countries and among various individuals. I think that in all cases (certainly in all cases where the child has been taught anything about the Supreme Being) a separate—though always anthromorphic—conception of Him is gradually formed in the mind (often beginning to form very early), built out of what the child had heard about Him, to which are attached (also gradually, but more quickly and more completely when the change I have before alluded to takes place) those ideas of obligation which, as I have said, are at this period transformed from those to whom the child has been in subjection, to the God he has been brought up to believe in.

“In cases where the moral atmosphere in which the child has been brought up (especially that of his home) has been pure and sweet, and the con-



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ceptions which he has gained of God from other sources do not greatly exceed in beauty those which he gains from watching the lives of his parents, that moral Ideal which he has gradually obtained will not compel him to note any painful discords marring the moral beauty of his actions; and throughout his life their example will be helpful to him, as embodying and giving a greater definiteness to that Ideal. It is to be feared, however, that the cases are few in which a painful discrepancy is not soon manifest to the child between his Ideal and the actions of those whom he loves and looks up to most. This is especially the case where the child gains his chief knowledge of God from the Bible. His receptive mind readily accepts its high precepts, and yields to the attractive power of the noble characters it portrays; though perhaps he has not yet had sufficient experience of life to apprehend their true sublimity, and—not comprehending the difficulty of attaining to their level—does not make sufficient allowance for, or judge with sufficient charity, those whose lives show such glaring defects in comparison.

“But the chief fact I wish to note with regard to these conceptions of God and morality which the child gains, and which (if he remain in either of the two classes I have described above) he continues to hold with but little modification through manhood, is this—that they are conceptions *about* Him rather than knowledge *of* Him.

“I do not care to press this distinction too far, but it is worth considering a little.

“The ideas and conceptions of God which a child

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has are those which he receives from other minds. They vary greatly in truthfulness and clearness according to the age and the particular moral atmosphere in which he has grown up, but they are in every case alike in this, that they only describe and represent to his mind truths—Reality—of which he is not yet directly conscious, which he believes in from report (and consequently according to report, not otherwise), but which he does not yet see for himself. He has not yet known the Reality of which they tell; he has not yet verified the reports concerning it by his own experience. We are familiar enough with the distinction between these two kinds of knowledge in our everyday experience. We all know how different it is to know about a thing from other people's descriptions of it, and to know it from having seen and examined it for ourselves. We may know about many places and things we have never seen, and often gain very clear conceptions about them from conversation with people who have seen them, or from books or pictures. But we experience widely different feelings, we have a wholly different knowledge of them, when we see them for ourselves. This is the case even when other people's descriptions are fuller, and take note of more details, than our own observation. These descriptions are exceedingly valuable *in helping us to see* when we stand face to face with the object described; but no fulness of description will produce in a man the same effect as personal observation. The two experiences are distinct. The man who is able to say, 'I have seen,' though he may not be able to give so good a description of what he

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has seen as one who has only gained his knowledge from others, stands in a wholly different position, has a wholly different kind of knowledge. He not only knows *about* it, he knows *it*.

“And if this is true of the knowledge we can have of things, it is far truer of the knowledge we can have of *persons*. Who will venture to say he knows a person when he has never seen him or had intercourse with him, but has only had his features, his habits and his character and disposition described to him by others? Or can he be said to know him, even when he has seen him and noted his actions and habits? Is not this knowledge wholly superficial? Can he be said to truly know him before he has discovered what his thoughts are, what the principles which guide his conduct, the motives which influence him, the affections which inspire him?

“I cannot now write fully on this point. It would take me too far from what I want to say about Conversion to point out how far this analogy holds good—how completely by means of it can be illustrated the various kinds of knowledge of, and the various kinds of relationship with, the Eternal which men have or can have.

“What I wish to note now is that there are these two kinds of possible knowledge—the knowledge *about*, received from others, and the knowledge *of*, gained for one’s self—distinct in kind, and placing the person who possesses the one or the other in very different relations with the object known.

“I am quite ready to admit, however, that there are many cases in which (where the knowledge is of persons) this knowledge about them, which we

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receive from others is invaluable—indispensable, indeed, in helping us to know them. If a biographer, for instance, gives a true and faithful picture of the man he is writing about, we may through him get to know the man as well as, perhaps even better than, if we had met him face to face. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that it will not be from the biographer's account of his subject's actions and habits that we shall get truly to know the man, nor yet from his explanations of these, nor even from his interpretation of the man's words and thoughts, though these may be helpful. It will be the truthfully recorded words, and thoughts, and actions of the man himself which will help us most of all,—perhaps it is not too much to say, will alone help us, to get to know him. And in giving us these, the biographer is not giving us knowledge about the man, but direct knowledge of him; he is simply acting as a medium whereby direct communication can be established between our spirits and the spirit of him whose life he depicts.

“It is thus that, through the Gospels, we get to know Jesus—know Him so truly and fully that, though (as Peter says) we have never seen Him, we can yet love Him.

“But it is necessary, in order to understand what the New Birth is, to note further that in the case of knowledge of persons (the only illustration, this, which will adequately exemplify the relations between man and the Eternal) the main difference which occurs in conscious experience when the transition is made from knowledge about them to knowledge of them is that the emotions are

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roused, the affections are stimulated (I am speaking of cases where the individuals are worthy to be loved),—roused and stimulated, if not in a wholly different way, at any rate with an intensity and to a depth which is not possible as long as the knowledge is knowledge about them only.

“Of course, in cases where the person known is worthy of affection, or where he is not truly known, or not known deeply enough to inspire affection,—as for instance (1) in the case of a cruel and selfish master whom a slave is compelled to obey; or (2) in the case of a master who is really good and worthy of respect and love, but whom the slave does not know intimately enough to discover these qualities in him, but only those sterner and harsher ones which in ordinary relations with him (either directly or through his agents) he exhibits:—in these cases affection cannot be roused.

“But however true and accurate the reported knowledge of a man may be, it cannot rouse the same emotion, or kindle and sustain the same affections, as direct, personal knowledge can.

“If it were necessary for me to discuss in greater detail the nature of this secondary knowledge, I might proceed to elaborate still further, distinguishing between imperfect knowledge about a man, and full, faithful, and complete knowledge about him; but there is no need to go further into the matter. Moreover, all knowledge about a man must be imperfect—it cannot fully and faithfully acquaint us with what he is; and all imperfect knowledge of a man, occupying itself, as it does, chiefly, if not exclusively, with what is external and

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superficial, and not penetrating to what is central and fundamental, can only be called knowledge about him; so that any distinction which can be drawn between the two is more a distinction in thought than in fact.

"I would, however, insist with emphasis on the fact to which I have just alluded, *i. e.* that this kind of knowledge is not capable of kindling and sustaining affection. Its imperfection, even if it is primary knowledge, does not permit of that trust being reposed in the being thus known, which is the only basis on which affection can rest. And if it is secondary knowledge, thought is incapable of sustaining, by mere contemplation of a mental image, which is never compared with Reality, and which never knows the formative and remodelling touch of the living Truth upon it, that glow of pure emotion, that throb of undying affection, which is experienced when a fellow-mortal, worthy of our esteem, is known, and trusted, and loved. At the best only inferior emotions can accompany this imperfect knowledge—fear, awe, and perhaps reverence; not those purest and deepest feelings of which the soul is capable when heart goes out to meet heart, and spirit mingles with spirit, in the rapturous communion of love.

"And, to carry this line of thought one step further, if the individual known is in a position of power and authority over him who knows, and has a right to claim obedience and service from him, the character of the obedience and service the one renders (and in a very considerable measure its degree also) will depend on the amount of knowl-



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edge he has of the other (I am assuming that the individual known is good, and worthy of respect and affection), and on the nobleness of the emotions which he consequently experiences with regard to him.

“If he regards him with fear and awe, he will serve and obey him unwillingly, grudgingly, from compulsion, or from prudence, endeavouring to keep the amount of his service and obedience as near to a minimum as possible. As the emotions which he feels towards him increase in nobleness, the character of his service will alter, becoming ever more willing, and more freed from the feeling of compulsion, as his emotions approach more nearly to the noblest, sublimest feeling of love. And when love is aroused, all unwillingness vanishes, all constraint is removed; he serves from that time freely, willingly, joyfully; the two are no longer master and servant, but friend and friend, the one serving, the other receiving service, in the contented spirit of joyful fellowship.

“Now I find that the character of the obedience and service which is rendered to God by the men who are included in the two classes under which I have arranged them above, never goes beyond that inspired either by ignoble emotions, or by those which, though they can be classed under the noble emotions, come short of the noblest one of love.

“Roughly speaking, I think we may say that those who are included under the first class are prompted to obedience (in so far as they obey at all) only by ignoble emotions; while those who are included under the second, though very often

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a good deal of their obedience is prompted to some extent by ignoble emotions, yet are chiefly influenced by those emotions—such as reverence, gratitude, or respectful admiration—which are noble, but which fall short of the noblest.

“Consequently, these latter, though they often follow the voice of conscience most faithfully, and obey the Moral Law most diligently, do not attain to that perfectly free, willing, and joyful obedience which only love can inspire. A fearfulness of offending, an unwillingness to go beyond the letter of the commandment, a *painfulness*, is observable in their service. Their whole life seems under restraint, and is without freedom, spring, or buoyancy. And this must be so, for love alone releases from the fetters of law; love alone inspires; the service which love renders is alone spontaneous, and possessed of that instinctiveness which unerringly guides to right, to full, to perfect action.”

“And this brings me to the heart of the matter—to the question to which a satisfying answer must be given before even the possibility of the New Birth can be admitted.

“I have hitherto been examining the facts concerning the God-consciousness and the knowledge concerning Him, which the majority of men possess; and I think they go to establish completely the view which I put forward at the beginning of this essay—that this consciousness and this knowledge are with most men imperfect,—with the large majority exceedingly feeble and defective. The knowledge of God which the majority of men pos-

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sess, fails to reach the fulness and the dignity of true, fundamental knowledge; and the emotions which prompt their obedience fall short of the noblest emotion which can animate the human spirit—the emotion of love.

“We now come to the question—But is truer knowledge obtainable? Can deeper depths of consciousness be stirred? Can fundamental truths concerning the Eternal be arrived at? Is there solid ground of truth on which to base the emotion of love?

“Here again, as in the previous part of my inquiry, the appeal must be made to facts. I have pointed out how far ordinary consciousness and ordinary knowledge go; how far are we justified in saying that extraordinary consciousness and knowledge can go—have gone?

“There are two, and only two, sets of facts to which we can appeal for answer to the question: the facts concerning human nature—its constitution, capacity, needs; and the recorded and observed facts of conscious experience.

“With regard to the former, modern philosophy has endeavoured to put them out of court in this inquiry by refusing to admit the legitimacy and the reasonableness of religious faith or trust. It is unwilling to admit in the case of faith that it is a faculty, the possession of which is a reasonable ground for supposing that somewhere or other in the universe there is that which will satisfy it,—that the Non-ego must contain satisfaction for this as well as for all the wants of the Ego,—that the Eternal Spirit who created us, and gave us the

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constitution we possess, created us to trust, *i. e.* to exercise and find support in a fitting environment, for that faculty of faith which we undoubtedly possess. Nay, it even plunges into deeper depths of doubt and unbelief by questioning whether the possession of any faculties is a sufficient ground for supposing that the universe contains satisfaction for them. It is infected by a scepticism which spreads its blighting influence over the whole of life; nothing is sacred from its withering breath; it is palsied by a faithlessness—

“‘Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.’

Of course, in the presence of such doubt as this, reason can do nothing but shut its mouth. Argument is useless where the bases of argument are denied; and those who accept and those who do not accept the axiom, that faculties imply the existence of that which will satisfy them—those who have faith and those who have not—must divide into two for ever irreconcilable parties.

“There are two facts, however, which I would note before leaving the point. The first is that life is far ahead of thought—at any rate, of much modern philosophical thought—in the matter. For there is hardly a single action or relationship in everyday life which does not rest on this axiom—which does not pivot itself unhesitatingly on the trustful confidence that wants imply, and will surely find, that which will satisfy them. The validity of this assumption is admitted in ordinary intercourse between men with a readiness, and to an extent, of which the philosophers seem to be but little

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aware, or to which, at any rate, they do but scant justice.

“The other point I would note about it is, that it forms the very corner-stone of the teaching of the Great Teacher of Nazareth.

“Behold the birds of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they?”

“If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you: O ye of little faith?”

“If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?”

“These utterances speak for themselves, and need no comment. And seeing that the Great Teacher based His appeal to men to go to God, and seek from Him satisfaction for the cravings and needs of their nature, on the assumption that He had given these cravings in order to satisfy them, and would satisfy them as surely as He supplied the needs of things He had placed lower in the scale of existence, it surely is legitimate to use the same argument still, let a pessimistic and agnostic philosophy doubt and deny as it will.

“And (applying this argument) are there not longings and cravings in man which cry for a fuller knowledge of the Eternal than most possess? Are there not heart-feelings which hunger for a satisfaction which in most cases they do not find? Are there not dormant emotions which might be roused,

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if they could find that on which they might nourish themselves? Does *any* man feel that he has drunk fully of the wine of life—that he has no undeveloped or unsatisfied faculties; no ideal which he does not long to realize? The unanimous voice of humanity replies—

“‘Tis life of which our nerves are scant,  
More life and fuller that we want.’

“True, this longing is vague in most men—vague and misunderstood; and they are consequently led to try to appease it in foolish and impossible ways, seeking in sensual pleasures, and in material things, satisfaction for those infinite cravings which these can never satisfy.

“But we are not without evidence of the true character of these longings, or of the kind of satisfaction which alone will appease them. Here and there men have appeared who have understood themselves,—men in whom the dumb cravings of humanity have become articulate.

“‘My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God,’ cried one of these. ‘Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us,’ murmured another; and the unsatisfied heart of man, hearing its imperfectly satisfied longings thus thrown into form, replies, ‘Yes, that is what I want.’\*

\* My friend puts in brackets here—

[“One form which this longing has taken—the desire on the part of man to satisfy justice, to fill up somehow the gap between what they feel they ought to be, and what they know they are—in other words, to make atonement for Sin, has been much insisted on by theologians, and



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"But in arriving at the truth in this inquiry, the chief appeal must be made to the second series of facts to which I have referred: the recorded and observed facts of conscious experience. It is not enough to point to man's unsatisfied cravings, and dormant or undeveloped powers; if there were no proof that they had been or could be satisfied, there would always be room for the gnawings of an unappeasable doubt, in the presence of the mystery of a silent universe.

*"Have* they been satisfied? That is the question which must be answered. Have there been any men who have known the Eternal with a more fundamental knowledge than that which the majority have had—any who have had a fuller consciousness of Him than most; who have deemed that they have had sufficient knowledge of Him to justify them in basing on it the supreme emotion of love; whose relations with Him have risen to communion, whose service has been that of friendship; to whom duty has been a pleasure, and obedience a passionate joy; who have felt themselves knit to Him by the bonds of a supreme and undying affection;—have there been such?

"Yes.

"They have been few. Prior to the Christian era they were almost exclusively confined to one nation; at least, history gives us but dim and

has been made the ground of the doctrine of the Atonement. They seem to me, however, to miss the chief significance of the fact, namely, that this craving to satisfy justice is only the obverse side of the desire to be just. I must think this out."]

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doubtful glimpses here and there of a few such outside of its favoured ranks.

"They have had many different degrees of fulness of knowledge; many different degrees of fulness of conscious communion, and of joy and delight in service. One only stands out from all the rest supreme in flawless perfection of knowledge, in unfathomable depth of communion, in uttermost degree of loving and self-renouncing service. Him the world has never since ceased—can never cease—to look up to and adore as the Ideal of Humanity, and the unapproachable type of the Eternal. Beside Him, all other ideals appear poor and mean, all other types imperfect. Since He came, the world has been a changed world; and many, drawing from the stores of His wisdom, and being inspired by His Love (many, where there were few before, many, who could boast of no special endowments, no brilliant attainments), have been lifted into a new life; have tasted of His peace and of His joy; have learned what that service is which is freedom, and that love which casts out fear; have come through Him to the Father. I say, many; and indeed, in comparison with the number of those who, out of all the unnumbered millions who lived before Jesus Christ came, can be ranged in the ranks of these choice souls, those whom the Christian centuries have produced of this order have been numerous. But in comparison with the multitudes which compose the generations of mankind, they have been, and are still, the few. Here and there among the careworn, sorrowful, despairing

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faces of the crowd, we meet with eyes which shine with a light

“That never was on sea or shore,”

with foreheads which bear the stamp of peace, with a mien which tells of the consciousness of sonship with the Eternal. But how seldom! And the great world rolls on in its death-in-life, heedless of them (nay, often rolls over them, and crushes them, even as it crushed Him who came to save it), or toils along the painful, unilluminated path of duty, and will not drink of the cup of life which is ready at its lips.

“But though those who have attained to fuller knowledge of the Eternal (and in whom the deeper depths of consciousness have been stirred, have always been, and are still, the few;—and though only One had fullness of knowledge, which the world has been unable to exhaust, and fulness of life, which the world has been unable to comprehend,—we cannot ignore their experience, we cannot refuse to listen to their testimony.

“This, in very truth, is what they have found life to be—this, no otherwise. Human beings like ourselves, they have discovered in it these possibilities; they have attained to these actualities. Surely these are facts of tremendous significance—a significance the importance of which in any attempt to comprehend human nature cannot be overestimated. For the attainments of the few more than outweigh the failures of the many: we must measure life by its plus quantities, not by its minus ones.

“What, then, is the characteristic feature of this

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deeper consciousness? of this fuller life? By what marks are we to distinguish those who possess it from those whom I have ranged under the other two classes?

"The answer to this question I have already hinted at. There is one feature which distinguishes this life from all other—affection; there is one note which vibrates in the hearts of all those who possess it—the note of love.

"I have said that only fundamental knowledge will support such a deep consciousness of God as this, or rouse and nourish the emotion of love.

"I do not want now to enter into the question: how those who have attained to this fundamental knowledge of God (or what they have deemed fundamental, and built their lives on, with such grand results) have gained it. The question is one of great interest, and also of great mystery; but a theory about it is not necessary for my present purpose (nor indeed for any purpose, except the desire to know) if the fact be granted that this knowledge is true and fundamental knowledge.

"But let the appeal be once more to facts. What kind of knowledge, what kind of convictions concerning the character of the Eternal do we find invariably associated with this deeper consciousness—with this fuller life?

"In all cases, knowledge—convictions—which include and lay most stress on those qualities which, in human beings, we cannot help considering as most fundamental—*i. e.* not merely or chiefly physical characteristics, as strength or beauty; not merely intellectual qualities, as knowledge and wis-

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dom; but moral and heart qualities. In every case in which the fullest Life has been reached; in which joy and delight in service have been greatest; in which the noblest emotions have been kindled, the heart-qualities of the Eternal are those on which attention has been centered. Before the Christian centuries we find that the convictions concerning these heart-qualities approached nearer and nearer to, and after the coming of Jesus Christ that they invariably culminated in, the conviction that the deepest and most fundamental characteristic of the Eternal is love.

“And here I find that I must insert a qualification to two remarks I have just made. The first concerns what I have said about the men who, before the time of Jesus Christ, attained to this deeper consciousness of God, and to this fuller knowledge of Him, which I am now considering.

“Deep indeed the consciousness was, and full the knowledge,—so different from the consciousness and the knowledge of those whom I have included in the other two classes, that I think I am amply justified in placing them among those whose distinguishing mark is affection and love.

“And yet I find that it is necessary to make a distinction between the consciousness of and knowledge of God which even the noblest souls had who lived before the Christian era, and that which has been attained to since. (I have in my thoughts chiefly the noblest souls of the Hebrew nation, and I think there is no need to look further. There are few indeed who will not admit that no man of any other nation, not even the sage of India—who to all

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appearance was the noblest soul the world produced outside the bounds of Palestine—excelled the choicest spirits of the Hebrew race in sublimity of conviction concerning, and in fulness of conscious communion with, the Eternal). Their knowledge of Him in some cases almost reached to the conviction that He was the Father; the emotions which accompanied their communion with Him almost trembled into love. But not quite. There was always a reaching out to a fuller knowledge not yet grasped. Their love and their emotions were like those of a bridegroom who with eager anticipation looks forward to, and yearns for the time when he shall possess his bride; not of him who possesses. He that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than they.

“And the second qualification I have to make concerns what I said about it not being necessary to ascertain how those who have attained to fundamental knowledge of God have gained it. I was thinking of inspiration, and had in my mind only those who have been the sources of this knowledge—the prophets and seers of the world. *That* question it is not necessary to discuss here.

“But it is necessary to note this: the men who reached the heights before the coming of Jesus Christ were isolated, lonely men; men in whose case—though they nearly all belonged to one nation, and, viewed in the perspective of history, present a continuous line of mountain peaks along which the light of Truth was flashed for fifteen hundred years—it is impossible to trace *how* the Truth was kindled, whence it came. It blazes up and burns,



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now in a prophet, now in a king; now in a priest; now in a herdsman; and then for a while it dies down, and we cannot trace it for years, or even for generations. It is like those variable stars which ever and anon flash out in the heavens, and then fade, to be succeeded by others as uncertain and transitory; or like the flash of a sudden sun-caught wave on a silent sea, when some inhabitant of its depths has for a moment disturbed its calm. How it was kindled there, I say, we do not know. Men murmur 'inspiration,' scattering dust to hide their ignorance. So long as we know and feel that it was the spark sent forth when men's souls *struck Truth*, what need we of further knowledge?

"But the case is different with those who, in the Christian centuries, have gained this deeper knowledge of God, and have attained to the consciousness of living fellowship with Him.

"Their knowledge has all come from One Source; their love has been kindled from One Heart—the Heart of the Man Jesus Christ. Whether the world, by the slow and painful process of development by experience, could have arrived by itself at fundamental knowledge of the Eternal, and could have attained to that full life of communion with Him of which the capacity of human consciousness permits, is a question which I cannot answer. I once thought it probable (*see* Chap. II.). I now say, I do not know. But it is a question which it is now idle to ask. For not thus alone, and by slow and painful effort has it been decreed that man should gain this knowledge; not thus tardily were the slumbering depths of his being to be

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stirred, and his dormant capabilities to be aroused to life. For quietly, in the midst of a generation that knew Him not, a Man was born and grew up, who, with a bound, sprang to the highest height of human knowledge and wisdom, of human perfection, of human love; One who condensed in one word all knowledge of the Eternal of which the utmost wisdom can conceive, or which the utmost need can crave; One who concentrated into a three years' ministry the utmost beauty and sweet perfectness of character of which the human imagination can dream; One who displayed by one act the utmost love which the human heart in its deepest longings can need.

"If any man asks how knowledge of Truth—of God—has been gained, or could have been gained apart from Jesus of Nazareth, I could frame some kind of answer, perhaps various answers. But it is needless to give them, for the Truth is *there*. But if any one asks how the slumbering depths of human consciousness can be stirred—how man's undeveloped capacity for loving and being loved can be roused to activity, I can only give one answer, but with all the tones of certitude: 'By the power of a supremely self-sacrificing life, by the power of a supremely self-renouncing love.'

"And this suggests many thoughts which I must at present refrain from writing down: they fly off at too great tangents from the arc of thought which I am at present endeavouring to describe. But I think I can now venture upon a definition of what has all along been the end of my inquiry—Conversion, or the New Birth.

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"I have pointed out what the ordinary consciousness and ordinary knowledge of the Eternal is; I have shown what knowledge and what consciousness it is possible to have. I think I have made it clear that, though it may be difficult to draw an exact line of demarcation in particular cases between superficial and fundamental knowledge (between knowledge *about* and knowledge *of*) that the two kinds are distinct, and in their main features easily distinguishable. I think I have also shown that the same is true of the two kinds (or degrees) of consciousness;—that though a shallow consciousness may have various degrees of depth, and may be inspired by motives of various degrees of nobleness, there is still a marked difference between this class of consciousness and that deeper kind of which, I have endeavoured to show, history proves the human spirit to be capable.

"The question whether it is a difference in kind, or only in degree, I will consider presently. But since there *is* a difference, and since *all* men at first (*i. e.* in childhood), and most men throughout life, only attain to various degrees of the *shallower* consciousness, a transition to the deeper consciousness must be possible and necessary, and it has, in many undoubted cases, actually taken place. And this transition—this change—is conversion, or the New Birth.

"Let me try and put it in a formal definition.

"Conversion is that change which takes place in a man when he apprehends the fundamental characteristic of the Personality of which his own personality makes him conscious, and begins to feel to-

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wards Him that deepest emotion of which his nature is capable—love; being thereby led to conform willingly, joyfully, and with intelligent obedience to those intimations of His will of which he possesses knowledge; inasmuch as he recognizes them to be the true laws of life.”\*

“The last two clauses of this definition suggest tempting fields of thought, into which, however, I must not now wander. I will only note for future expansion:—

“(1) That fundamental knowledge of God’s *character*, and love towards Him does not imply full knowledge of His *Will*. That knowledge is progressive, a continual ‘following on to know’ more fully;—herein differing from the knowledge which those who have not undergone the New Birth have of God’s Will, *i. e.* their knowledge of the moral law,—of what is right and what is wrong—a kind of knowledge which does not develop, but, on the

\*“Those who advocate the theory of the relativity of all human knowledge would wish me to modify this by saying ‘the most fundamental which man is capable of apprehending.’ I cannot discuss that point now; and except as a piece of doubtfully beneficial mental gymnastics, I doubt whether it is worth discussing at all. It cannot possibly be decided whether what is ultimate truth to us is the ultimate truth of truth. What good can it do to imagine an absolute which we can never know, behind truth as we know it?

“For my own part (since an opinion on the subject one must have, and putting it down can do no harm), I believe that the knowledge we have of the Eternal is ‘absolute’ knowledge. The Fact of facts is **Living Love**. There is no deeper depth. Comprehend it we cannot; apprehend it we can.” Thus my friend in parentheses.

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contrary, is rather apt to depreciate; especially in those who belong to class I. above.

“(2) That when the Law-giver is known to be good, the law must be known to be good also, and necessary; not arbitrary;—live-giving, and joy-producing.

“And now with regard to the nature of this New Birth (its effects I have several times tried to describe, but have always ended with the conviction that they are indescribable—that they must be *felt*, and the life lived, before it and they can be understood). How is the change best described? Is it a change in degree of life merely, or is it a change in kind?

“The first thing to be noted in considering this question—a fact which assuredly should be allowed very considerable weight—is the term which Jesus used when describing it.

“He called it a ‘New Birth.’ This, I think plainly indicates what answer He would have given to my question. He could hardly have found a stronger term, or one which denotes a more radical change. If the objection is raised that the phrase ‘born anew’ only occurs in the Fourth Gospel, and cannot be asserted confidently to have been used by Jesus, I reply that the statement recorded in Matt. xviii. 3, ‘Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven,’ implies a no less radical change. The weight of Jesus’ testimony must undoubtedly be placed in favour of the idea that the change is not merely one of *degree* of consciousness, but one of *kind*.

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"But is there no further testimony? Is there no human experience which approaches to it—no deepening of our human consciousness, no expansion of our being, to which we can liken it? I think there is.

"I have already referred to that change which takes place in the physical part of our nature when manhood is reached; when the circle of our being is enlarged by the addition of another instinct, making us conscious of new relations, opening our eyes to a new and hitherto unsuspected (or only dimly suspected) world of thought and emotion.

"The terrible abuse of this instinct of which humanity has been guilty—the hell of thought and feeling which is associated with it—has almost wholly annihilated in men's minds even the possibility of conceiving it to be a noble instinct; has almost wholly obscured all true apprehension of its significance; has almost blinded men to the wisdom, and beneficence, and love displayed by their Creator in its bestowment.

"This abuse also prevents one from speaking of it freely, or from employing it to illustrate—as it, I think, alone can adequately illustrate—the subject upon which I am now entering. Therefore, I will not speak further of this Heaven-bestowed sacrament of love. But I must point out how the fact of this addition to, and expansion of, our physical nature, increases the possibility, at any rate, of a similar expansion of our spiritual nature.

"If the human race never reached the age at which this instinct develops, how inconceivable and



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impossible would all that world which it opens up be to it! And seeing that this expansion of the physical nature does take place, and seeing that in some men a closely analagous expansion of the spiritual nature occurs, is there not reason—some reason, at any rate—for supposing that the majority of the race are still spiritually children, undeveloped, with enormous possibilities of life still lying dormant within them?

“But leaving this analogy of our physical nature, let us turn to its counterpart in deeper regions of our being.

“Love! the sweet, pure love between man and woman; who is ever tired of listening to that theme? Who will dare to place a limit to its transforming influence on the nature? Who has fathomed its depths?

“Tempting as this theme is for a digression, I confine myself for the present to the matter in hand—the light, namely, which this supreme experience—the awakening of love—can afford us in arriving at sound conclusions concerning the nature of the New Birth.

“Is the change which takes place in a man when this divine emotion is stirred within him to be adequately described as a change in the *degree* of his previous consciousness, or is it the dawn of a new kind? Are the thoughts, the emotions, the life which is roused within him when his hopes for all the future years centre in the question whether another being regards him with similar feelings—whether another heart vibrates to that new, sweet, astonishing note which has been struck in his—are

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these I say, but a deepening and expansion of the thoughts, and emotions, and life which he has known before?

“And when the bond has been struck, when the sacred path of wedded life has been entered upon, and the fidelity and devotion of years has deepened and intensified a hundredfold the bliss of that union of heart with heart which began so long ago; is it still only in degree that his life differs from that sum of conscious experience which was his before the hand of Love struck the chords of his being, and made them vibrate, in strains of unutterable sweetness, in response to her master-touch? Those who have known what true love is (alas! how few), *true* love—which deepens and sweetens with every succeeding year, and still shows an infinite expanse ahead—an infinite universe of undeveloped possibilities, an infinite heaven of unattained communion—will not, I think, deem it adequate to define it as an intensified *degree* of their previous consciousness—of their previous life.

“Rather will they say, ‘I did not know what life was before I felt the touch of love; since then the world has been a changed world; behold, all things have become new.’

“And if we can speak thus of human love—the love which nourishes itself on a finite spirit, shall we not much more speak in similar terms of that change which comes upon the soul when it awakes to the consciousness that Infinite Love is opening out its arms to receive it—nay, holds it already and always in its embrace—is brooding over it with an infinite passion of delight and longing, and with trembling

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eagerness is striving to arouse it to response, by kisses of ineffable tenderness? When *that* truth bursts in upon the spirit, or dawns upon it like the gradual awakening of a summer's day, is it merely the intensification of the old consciousness which it produces? Is it merely an added warmth to the old life? Nay! Life was not life before, it was an existence, a dream. Then only, when he has felt the touch of the Divine Love upon him, does man awake; then only, when the New Birth is consummated, does he begin to live.

"If any one who has never known what love, human or Divine, is, were to read these musings of mine, I doubt not that he would be of the opinion that the impetus of thought had carried me away from sober truth into the region of cloudy imaginings and baseless fancies.

"I cannot help it. That life is *so* good may well seem impossible to those who have never awakened to life.

"But, in case any one should read these notes of mine when I am gone, I here record, that what I have written above is to me the expression of the soberest truth; an unvarnished, unexaggerated statement of what life is, as I have seen, and felt, and known it, during my years of mortal consciousness."

Here this long and interesting note ends; but the following, which immediately succeeds it in my friend's note-book, is evidently intended to be supplementary to it.

"Heaven never works without instruments; never accomplishes ends without means.

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"It may not be always possible to trace these to their source, in fact it cannot be possible. Life begins and ends in mystery; only a few links of the chain of causation are visible, only for a few steps can we trace the footsteps of God before they disappear in the Divine dark.

"But that is no reason for refusing to trace them as far as we can. As far as our finite minds can understand the workings of the Infinite Mind, and plumb the depths of infinite truth we are not only justified in making the attempt, but bound to make it.

"This thought came to me while pondering the question of the means by which the New Birth is effected in men, and the manner of its accomplishment. I have made the statement in a previous note that all those who have in the Christian centuries attained to fundamental knowledge of God, and to that deeper consciousness of Him in which love is the controlling emotion, have derived their knowledge from one source—have all had their love kindled from one heart—from the Man Christ Jesus. But whence did He obtain His knowledge? At what flame was His love kindled? Ah! at this point the track disappears, the chain of causation vanishes into the unknown. 'From God—from the Infinite Wisdom and Love,' we say; but that light is too dazzling to be beheld by human eyes.

"Many interesting thoughts suggest themselves on that subject; but I do not want now to follow the line of thought which moves upwards into those regions of mystery, but the one which moves downwards, and keeps within the limits of the sphere in

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which the mind can legitimately claim to exercise itself.

"The question I wish to consider is this: How, so far as we are capable of ascertaining, is the New Birth brought about in men? what are the instruments which Heaven makes use of in order to produce this great effect?

"It is certain that love alone can beget love. The capacity may be there—indeed, must be there—but only the kindling touch of love can awaken it to life.

"In the case of human love we can say with certainty that the capacity and desire to love and to be loved is present in every heart, though how the diffused emotion *crystallizes* round one particular object is a mystery beyond our fathoming.

"But even human love has many degrees, and varies greatly in fulness and intensity. Can we account for these differences? Partly, I think, we can. It is universally recognized now that there are two main factors in the life of every individual—constitution and environment—and that the man is the product of these two. I do not want to discuss either of these in detail now, but simply to consider their bearing on the question in hand.

"We can say very little concerning the causes which produce variations in constitution. It is an undoubted fact that temperament varies. The natural capacity for loving is much greater in some than it is in others, but why it is we cannot say. Of late years it has been recognized that heredity has a great deal to do with the matter, but how far its influence extends, and what other influences are

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at work in determining the limits of a man's capacity we cannot say.

"Still we know enough about the facts of heredity to be able to say that there is much more likelihood that the children of good and loving parents will have good dispositions and loving natures, than the children of bad parents, and those who have little or no love for each other.

"And I think we can say further (applying this to my main consideration), that the children of good parents are far more likely to attain to the New Birth than those who are the offspring of loveless marriages. 'The seed of the righteous shall inherit the earth'—a far-reaching truth! 'The children of Thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before Thee.' Yes, that is one way by which God's kingdom comes.

"But we know so little as yet about this matter that it is better to leave it after saying that much.

"Concerning the other factor, however—environment—we know and can say more. Let us consider its connection with the new New Birth—how far its influence may be traced as an agent in the accomplishment of this result. I think that, broadly speaking, I am stating the truth when I say that the love which is roused in any human heart—whether that love has as its object another human being, or the Divine Being—corresponds in purity and intensity to the purity and intensity of the love of which that heart has conscious experience in its intercourse with other hearts. The great differences in temperament to which I have alluded above greatly obscure this law, and would doubtless cause



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many people to hesitate long before they accepted it as true.

“For there are so many cases in which souls blossom with rare beauty amid the most adverse circumstances, and so many others in which the purest and tenderest influences seem to have had no beneficial effect, that it may well seem to many impossible to discover any law governing these variations. They may justifiably hesitate to assign any important influence to environment when so many exceptions to the general law of its effects present themselves.

“This of course must continue to be the case as long as temperament remains to so large an extent an unknown quantity. Nevertheless the uncertainty which it introduces does not prevent us from arriving at certain definite conclusions concerning the influence of environment on character, and more especially its influence on the remarkable experience I am now considering—the New Birth.

“Nature furnishes us with an analogy which will help us in the endeavour to ascertain the quality and magnitude of this influence. Indeed, I am inclined to think that it is more than an analogy—that it is rather a parallel truth. I refer to the influence of environment on the growth of seeds.

“No one will deny that, in the case of seeds, both the factors I have mentioned—constitution and environment—are present; nor will any one deny how powerful the influence of the latter is.

“Take two seeds, which so far as can be ascertained are exactly alike, and place one in a favourable environment—in good soil, supplied with water,

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protected from cold winds, and where it will get plenty of sunshine; and plant the other where these favourable influences are not available. The result will be manifest from the moment of their appearance as plants.

“Or again, select the largest and, so far as you can judge, the most promising seed you can find, and also a small and unpromising one, and plant the former in an unfavourable environment, and the latter in a favourable one, and see whether this one does not attain to a development which rivals or surpasses that of its (constitutionally) more favoured brother.

“There is no need to carry out the comparison further, since the influence of environment on the lives of plants is universally acknowledged. I only add that, of course in cases in which the environment is the same, or equally favourable, but natural capabilities vary, the differences in the results which are due to the influence of this factor will be clearly manifested. What I have been saying necessarily implies that a fairer flower will result from the growth of a seed with high potentialities in a favourable environment than from the growth in a similar environment of one possessing smaller potentialities of life.

“I need hardly apply all this to the statement I have made concerning the development of love. If the truth of the comparison be admitted (and its legitimacy can hardly be called in question), then it must also be admitted that the natural capacities of any one for loving and being loved (whether these capacities are great or small) are much more

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likely to be developed when the individual is surrounded by good and loving influences than when these are absent.

“And now to come to the bearing of all this on the problem of the New Birth. Life alone can beget life, and only love can kindle love. How, then, is that supreme love, which is the distinguishing feature of the life which follows on the New Birth, kindled in the heart?

“I have said that originally it was kindled from one Heart; but I have also said that Heaven never works without instruments. What instruments does Heaven make use of now to bring about the New Birth—now, when we can only learn from fragmentary records the quality of that Heart—can only indirectly gain knowledge of it, not feel its direct and living influence. (I am endeavouring to keep clear of the region of mystery, and, moreover, am dealing with the time in the life-history of the individual before the Divine Love is directly known, and am only seeking to ascertain how it comes to be known.)

“I am certain that there are such instruments, and that they are the living hearts of men; by which I mean the hearts of living men—those, namely, who have themselves undergone the experience called ‘the New Birth,’ and who know what true life is.

“‘My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,’ wrote one who at least knew as much about these matters as any one; and again: ‘though ye have ten thousand teach-

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ers, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Jesus Christ I begat you through the gospel.'

"Yes, thus does Heaven ordain that the flame of Divine Love shall be transmitted from heart to heart; thus has it been transmitted for eighteen hundred years. There have always been some, even in the darkest times, in whose hearts it has glowed. God has never left Himself without witnesses in the world. That 'light of the knowledge of the glory of God' which first shone in the face of Jesus Christ has never ceased to shine in other faces since. Like the perpetual fire kept burning on the sacred altars, the Divine Flame came down from heaven to the shrine of human hearts, and though oftentimes it has burnt low, it has never since entirely gone out. Since it came the world has never been without some of that fire—the fire which was mysteriously, divinely kindled in the heart of Jesus Christ.

"I am tempted to expand on this theme. Much could be said about the way in which this living flame has been kept burning as the centuries have moved on; in spite of the decay of the early enthusiasm, the strifes about doctrines, the wreck of the Roman empire, the gloom of the dark ages, and the foul vapours arising from a hierarchy which sank continually to lower levels of corruption; in spite, too, of the shock of the Reformation, and all that has followed therefrom. But I must pass over all that now.

"On one point, however, it seems appropriate to say a few words, in order to bring my present line of thought to a fitting conclusion, namely, the most

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natural and appropriate way in which the New Birth should be accomplished.

"I have already hinted at the answer which, I think, is the correct one to give to this question, and what I have just written seems to confirm the suggestion I then made, *i. e.* that the influences and training to which a child is subjected in his home ought to (and will and do in many cases) constitute a natural and sufficient preparation not only for the duties and responsibilities of manhood, in its relations with the world, but also for manhood in its relations with the Eternal. One could write much sorrowfully, as well as much hopefully, on this subject. For how few are the homes in which, from the love and affection which the parents display towards each other, and the light of the Divine Love which glows in their hearts and shines in their faces, the children can learn with any degree of accuracy what true love is! How seldom can children step from the threshold of their earthly home with the consciousness that they are not about to wander in the mazes of a labyrinth to which they have no clue, but to explore the mansions of their Father's House!

"When we see under what far different influences most children grow up, what far different types of life most parents manifest, from that one and only true type of the Eternal which we have had given us in Jesus; when we see with what poverty of equipment for life's battle the rising generation is being sent forth to the fight, one ceases to wonder that so many are worsted in the struggle—one is not surprised that the progress of

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humanity is so slow. But one does wonder at the boldness and the patience of the Creator:—His boldness, I say, in venturing to create a race of beings which along such a path must be led to life; His patience in bearing with their sins and follies, and in waiting so long for the development of that life, and for the awakening of that love which He has created them to enjoy—the full possession of which by the creatures He has dowered so nobly and loves so intensely will alone satisfy Him, whose first, best name is Love.

“The importance of the home environment in determining the character of the man greatly needs to be insisted on; for the majority of those who now undertake the duties and responsibilities of parenthood display a deplorable—one may even say a criminal—ignorance in these matters, the penalty for which they, and their offspring, and the world have perforce to pay. For God, in His mercy and love, never exempts mankind from the penalties which He has attached to all violations of His laws. He is never less than just.

“But I have, I hope, written enough to show how important environment is in its influence on a developing life—how important is the warmth and brightness of the sun of love for the arousing in budding souls of that deepest, divinest instinct of all life—the instinct, the passion of love. When the homes of earth are lit up, not only with the flame of human love, but with the light of that Divine love which may be kindled from the heart of Jesus Christ, so that in very deed heaven may lie about the infancy, and shine in unclouded splen-



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dour on the childhood of the rising race, then may we hope to see the normal course of human development fulfilled, and our sons go forth to the battle of life with the assurance of victory on their faces, because they have the unconquerable strength of love in their hearts. But as it is—as this dark, sad world actually is—I fear we must still continue to see multitudes ushered into life foredoomed to defeat rather than pledged to victory. We must for the present be content to see here and there one or two of God's children rejoicing in His love, while the rest remain unilluminated, uninspired, ignorant of the infinite fulness of life which is their birthright.

“But let us possess our souls in patience. Let us wait in faith and hope till the vast plans of the Eternal are fully worked out. Let us endure (as He endures) to see the pain and the heavy travail of humanity. Let us ever confidently believe and hope that the hosts of men are being marshalled by the unerring skill of the Eternal towards a Promised Land, towards the fulness of an endless life tuned to the keynote of love; and that one day, all to the very last laggard and straggler, will be assembled within the gates of joy, within the haven of rest.”

## CHAPTER VII

### RELIGION—(*continued*)

#### THE MORAL SENSE

“That man possesses the power of self-determination—a free will—which enables him to decide between various contending motives, and to pursue one or another of many widely divergent courses of action, is a fact which, though it has sometimes been disputed in the study, has never been doubted in practical life.

“The whole of mankind’s active life is based on that assumption; it turns on that pivot.

“The denial of this truth, if worked out to its logical conclusions in life, would produce anarchy; it would make social life impossible, and degrade man below the level of the brutes.

“This has been practically admitted by those who have denied this axiom, inasmuch as they have never ventured to carry their theory to its logical conclusions—have never ventured to act upon it consistently. They have always brought in and acknowledged the point in dispute by admitting what is a direct consequence of freedom—responsibility; if not openly, yet at any rate practically, under some such disguise as the acknowledgment of the right of society to enact laws and to enforce them with pains and penalties.

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"Of course, whether we regard this question of the freedom of the will as the starting-point or as the goal of thought, there can be no agreement between those who take opposite sides. In the former case, those who refuse to admit it as a premise cannot be expected to admit the conclusions which are deduced from it; in the latter case, either some of the facts on which the one or the other conclusion is based must be disputed, or they must be interpreted in wholly different ways. From this watershed of thought the streams flow in opposite directions, and no ingenuity or skill can ever unite them.

"The question, on which side of this great mountain range of thought the streams can alone find their way to the ocean of truth, permits, to my thinking, of only one answer. The axiom of the freedom of the will enables me to formulate a theory of life which does violence to no intuition, gives the lie to no conviction, quenches no aspiration; while the necessitarian's position seems only to lead to marshes and stagnant pools, and to low levels of thought, where faith and hope are stifled by the clammy mists of doubt.

"I can understand the eagerness of scientific inquirers to bring the whole of nature, including human nature, within the domain of law. But law must be induced from all the facts with which experience acquaints us—not merely from some of them. It will not do to assume that human nature brings no new factors into the problem before human nature has been thoroughly, and I may add most reverently, studied. The probabilities, on the

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face of it, are that human nature does bring in some new factors. The hypothesis that man, who can control the forces of Nature, and wrest her secrets from her, has no elements in him of a higher order than those displayed in the phenomenal world, and is subject to no laws except those to which the material universe is subjected, is one which is stamped with all the marks of improbability—a hypothesis which should only be accepted sorrowfully after all others have been demonstrated to be untenable, not (as is too often the case in these days) assumed before investigation has commenced.

“He who will, with an earnest desire to find Truth, enter the field of investigation which human nature presents, will find the reign of law no less universal there than elsewhere. But let him not enter it with his mind full of preconceptions derived from the study of natural phenomena; let him not expect to find such laws as he finds among these. Let him be prepared to find in Heaven’s crowning work phenomena which he does not find elsewhere, and, consequently, new and strange indications of the reign of law in this higher sphere, of which God’s lower works give no hint. Let his preconceptions, if he must have them, be derived from the religious teachers, the seers, the poets—the men who have thought grandly and nobly of our race, and who have been the true scientific investigators of human nature. Then, and not till then, will he be in a position to apprehend rightly the truths which this new region contains. For man cannot be prejudged by ‘natural’ standards; he must be studied by himself. His own instincts, intui-

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tions, powers, and capacities must be accepted as the finger-posts which point the way to Truth. The truth here, I am convinced, is discoverable, if only the man who seeks for it keeps his mind free from prejudice, and is careful not to impair the powers of his mental vision by fixing his attention too intently and too exclusively on physical phenomena.

“Starting, then, from the axiom of the freedom of the will, let us see what manifestations of the reign of law are naturally to be expected in this region, and whether facts justify our anticipations.

“That man is not self-created, but has been brought into existence by a Power outside him, is a fact too obvious to admit of doubt.

“Now we cannot, without doing violence to all the laws of thought, and without surrendering the axiom on which the whole of scientific knowledge is based, conceive of effects without also conceiving of an adequate cause. If, therefore, man has a free will, and if it is certain that he did not create himself, we cannot avoid the conclusion that the Power which created him is possessed of a will; for otherwise we are driven to conclude that the Universe has evolved something greater than itself.

“But if the Power which made us has will, and if that will is not capricious, but continually energizes in fixed and constant ways, we should naturally expect to find within us intimations that this is the case—a ‘law of will,’ not, of course, enforcing obedience and reacting on disobedience in the same way as natural laws do, since the very nature of will forbids its being subject to that kind of necessity, but—under the conditions which will im-

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poses—putting in its claim for obedience no less majestically than do the other laws of the universe.

“If we find such a ‘law of will’ within us, not only does our axiom concerning the freedom of the will receive a confirmation which removes it for ever beyond the region of controversy, but the desire of scientific thought to extend the reign of law to all spheres of life receives both justification and satisfaction, and human nature is demonstrated equally with physical nature to be comprehended within the rule of an orderly Power, that works and wills with the strength of infinite might and with the constancy of infinite perfection.

“Now, such an intimation of a ‘law of will’ speaking with an authority which cannot be questioned, and claiming the explicit obedience of our wills, I am convinced that we have—in what we call ‘conscience.’

“The voice of conscience—that instantaneous and instinctive verdict which is pronounced within us on every act which requires the exercise of our wills—that intuition which enables, nay, compels us to distinguish *quality* in conduct—fulfils all the requirements which a scientific investigator, anxious to annex this region also to the realm of law, can demand.

“It is the direct witness to the nature of the will of the Power which made us. It testifies to the glorious truth that law reigns in the very centre of the Being of the Eternal—that even His will can be known, and confidently rested on as changelessly perfect. It is the guide of our noblest and most godlike faculty, directing it into the way of



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life. It shows how correspondence with our environment can be accomplished throughout the entire range of our faculties; how our wills and the Infinite Will can become one. Thus free will and conscience bear mutual testimony to one another, and both testify to the existence of a Living Will without us. If we had not free wills, conscience would be inexplicable: how could the soul avoid shipwreck on one or other of the innumerable rocks or shallows, or in one of the unnumbered whirlpools of existence, if there were no magnetic needle to guide volition on that unknown sea? And how account for either except on the supposition of an Eternal Will who has endowed us with some of His own superlative energy, and in the voice of conscience calls us to use it as He uses it, to live as He lives, to co-operate with Him, and to share in the boundless energies of His infinite and perfect life?

Of all the promises and potencies of life which our nature contains, conscience is the herald of the grandest and most illimitable. For it testifies to us of an environment (and at the same time bears witness to our capability to correspond with it) to whose infinity thought can place no bounds—to possibilities of life which are measureless. This environment is a Living Will. Conscience bears direct testimony to the quality—the character—of that Living Will which environs our wills. It is the stamp of the nature of the Eternal imprinted on our natures. Through conscience we make acquaintance with the loftiest and most fundamental of the modes of the Eternal which our being enables us to know. Our nature stops there; the possi-

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bilities of life extend no further. If there are any deeper depths in the Eternal than that Living Will which we know through conscience, they must remain for ever unknown and unknowable; unless, indeed, new faculties are developed in us which enable us to fathom them. At present we can know and can imagine nothing beyond or behind Personality. This is the ultimate environment of our being: correspondence with it will give us all that thought can imagine, all that conscience can demand, all that heart can crave. In such correspondence will be found satisfaction for our utmost need. To find and to live in the knowledge of the truth concerning the Will and Character of the Great Personality who environs us—in other words, to know the living and true God—is to find life in all its fulness and in all its blessedness. But at present the correspondence with this environment to which man has attained is notoriously defective. The call to life which conscience utters has hitherto been almost entirely disregarded; the possibilities which it discloses have been either despised or overlooked. Men have not lived—in this deepest sense of corresponding with this most fundamental Environment with which the moral sense makes us acquainted. This vast region of Reality has remained almost entirely unexplored. The world has been dead to it; and it is not too much to say that by neglecting this region, and by attempting to follow paths of activity which diverge from the broad highway of the eternal activities of the Real, man has missed life. He has attempted the impossible task of effecting other adjustments between

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his nature and the Infinite Truth than fact will permit of. He has chosen other guides for his volitions than the one with which his Creator has endowed him; and his Creator who will not be mocked, and who, in mercy, rewards every man according to his work, has required him to reap as he has sown.

“The true and scientific way of finding Truth in this region is by the method of discovery—the inductive method—which has produced such brilliant results in other regions.

“If any man wants to find out the truth concerning will—if he wants to demonstrate the truthfulness or falsity of the intimations which the moral sense conveys to him—let him subject them to the test of experience. Let him unswervingly act in harmony with these intimations; let him always choose the noblest motive for action; let him be true to his moral instincts: he will not be long in finding out whether they are deceiving him or not, whether conscience leads to darkness or to light, whether the path he is following becomes broader and plainer to discern as he proceeds, or leads to mazy labyrinths in which both he and it are lost. The three tests of truth are light, life, and joy. Fidelity to truth cannot fail to bring more light concerning it, a fuller sense of life in corresponding with it, and consequently a fuller sense of joy—which must always result from the right use of faculties.

“Now, I venture to assert that no man ever has followed, or ever can follow, the intuitions of conscience without receiving this reward. And this is

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the only way of proving whether conscience is a true guide or not. If any man will will as conscience directs, he shall know of its teaching whether it be of God (*i.e.* whether it is true) or whether it speaks of itself.

"There are regions of truth in this direction which remain almost unknown to the majority of our race. There is a promise of life here which as yet is almost wholly unrealized. Conscience calls us to oneness of life with the Eternal Life of the Universe; it is the witness to the fact that we are the sons of God.

"Thought fails us in our endeavour to apprehend the full splendour of that truth; imagination cannot picture the fulness of that life. That the gift of life bestowed on us by Heaven should be so measureless, is a fact, but one which cannot be comprehended. Even the faint and partial realization of the truth of which we are at present capable, strikes us dumb in an ecstasy of wonder and of joy. O Eternal Spirit, is Thy bounty so great?

"The attempt to analyze the contents of conscience is one which is attended with extreme and peculiar difficulty. For motives, in which inhere those peculiar qualities on which the moral sense pronounces judgment, are of almost infinite variety and complexity, being capable of a fineness of shading which almost defies analysis, by the admixture, in ever-varying proportions, of impulses derived from the different parts of our complex nature.

"Moreover—and this is a fact of considerable importance, and one which plays no small part in

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the lives of the great majority of men—heredity and early training leave their ineffaceable marks on the consciences of most men; and in a peculiar way.

“For though analysis brings us finally to *motives* as the objects of the intuitive judgments of the moral sense, this is by no means evident at first sight. To ordinary observation conscience seems to pronounce judgment, not on motives but on *acts*; and this view is apparently confirmed by the explicit commands and prohibitions of the moral and civil law. It is not in their earlier years—frequently it is not even in their later ones—that men are able to distinguish clearly between acts, and the motives which prompt them. They judge acts by whatever code of law they have adopted or—so it would be more correct to say in the majority of cases—drifted under; they only very imperfectly recognize, when they recognize at all, the importance of the underlying motives.

“This would matter little if their code of law embraced the sum total of acts which motives can result in, and assigned to each its appropriate reward or penalty; and if every motive had one and only one appropriate act in which it should result, and no valid reason could be assigned for giving it a different embodiment in deeds.

“But this is not the case. No code of law can embrace the whole sphere of human action. And every motive, in the great variety of circumstances in which it may present itself, may be appropriately embodied in many different acts. And such inevitable elements of fallibility as lack of knowledge and immaturity of judgment must always be present

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in every act, rendering it for ever impossible for us to expect, or even to conceive of one which is ideally perfect.

“The disposition to regard conscience as the adjudicator of acts and not as the discerner of motives seems to be partly the result of that wise ordinance of Nature which decrees that the higher faculties in man shall be the latest to develop. That which is natural comes first, afterwards that which is spiritual. Consequently it is on externals that attention is first fixed. We learn to appraise the value of acts long before we are able to discern the motives which have prompted them.

“Hence the ‘being under law’ is a condition of things natural to and inevitable in that state of immaturity which belongs to our early years. We must be ‘under law’ till such time as that late-developing faculty—the moral sense—has gained sufficient strength to undertake the guidance of the will; till then we must live by rules, not by principles, and are constrained to judge acts, not motives.

“But in the case of the majority of men the moral sense never does gain sufficient strength to make this advance; or, at any rate, it only partially makes it. Its development is arrested. It does not boldly take its seat on the throne of man’s being, and there royally arbitrate and rule. It clings to precedents, pronounces in accordance with the strict and literal interpretation of rules and customs, and is fearful of the smallest departure from established ordinances. This, indeed, is the chief reason why most men imagine that conscience judges acts



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and not motives. They never get beyond the state of childhood; they never take the step which frees from bondage to law, by yielding their wills to the guidance of the faculty which Heaven has appointed for that purpose.

“Into the question of the causes which have led to this state of things I cannot now enter. I will simply note here one of its inevitable consequences—a peculiarity of conscience as it testifies to most men which produces most important effects in their lives. It is this: that their conceptions of right and wrong are arbitrarily associated with many acts, the rightness or wrongness of which solely depends on the motives which prompt their performance,—acts which at one time fittingly and appropriately expressed genuine feelings, and originated from noble motives, but which now are fossils, punctiliously but unintelligently performed—without the living emotion and the noble incentive which originally brought them to the birth.

“It is hardly possible to overestimate the power and importance of the influence which these petrified motives exert on the lives of the majority of men. In some cases the man’s life consists of nothing else than a chain of laborious efforts to conform to their requirements, and he lives in continual fear lest he may have neglected some duty which they prescribe, or may not have fully performed it.

“History is full of instances in which these lifeless conventions have pressed upon the lives of individuals or of nations with an almost intolerable weight. They have bound men in bondage too

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grievous to be borne, and have not infrequently produced a most violent reaction, in which all authority has been shaken off, all law repudiated, and inclination and passion have come to be regarded as the only proper guides of action. Terrible and deplorable as the results of such a revolt inevitably are, the revolt itself is an indubitable evidence of life; and the wildest throes which betoken life are preferable to the stillness of death.

"The moral sense is the faculty which enables us to discern quality in motives. This, I think, is the most satisfactory definition which can be given of this instinct. All psychological analysis brings us finally to this intuitive judgment of the moral sense: 'This motive is nobler than that; I give no reasons; it *is*.'

"Psychology may indeed succeed in arranging all the motives, or springs of action, which influence the will in an approximately correct scale, according to their relative excellence; but this can be done only by applying to them the intuitive judgment of the moral sense and recording its verdict.

"But such a dogmatic assertion as this which the moral sense makes concerning the quality of motives must have its ground and justification in some fact outside ourselves. Its affirmations are wholly unintelligible unless we suppose that there is a region of truth in the Non-Ego to which it testifies—with which it is in harmony. Unless quality such as the moral sense bears witness to is a characteristic of the Universe, the ground on which all our knowledge rests—*i.e.* that the testimony of our faculties is trustworthy—is cut away

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from under our feet. The only assumption adequate to account for the affirmations of the moral sense is this: that the Living Will without us, whose existence we are compelled to postulate in order to account for the possession of will by ourselves, has quality of that kind which the moral sense discerns, *i. e.* rightness. Hence the moral sense is the faculty which enables us to discern Truth in this region—the highest region to which the capabilities of our nature enable us to explore.

“Now, if what I have asserted with regard to the moral sense is true (*i.e.* that it intuitively discerns quality in motives), it follows that ‘moral worth’ and ‘truth’ are identical. The impression conveyed to us by the moral sense that one motive is more worthy of being acted upon than another, implies that it discerns in it more truth of that particular kind which it is its function to discern than in the other. The moral sense’s affirmation of ‘rightness’ is equivalent to—*is*, indeed—an affirmation of truthfulness. It testifies—it cannot help testifying—to Truth. It can no more help discerning that one motive contains more of the quality of ‘rightness’ than another, than the eye can help differences in the intensity of light. It cannot help resting with satisfaction on that motive, in preference to all others, which contains most of that quality which it is its function to discern.

“And if this is so, there is clearly no reason why by its aid this region of Truth should not be explored to its limits. By the aid of the instinctive affirmations of the moral sense concerning the worth—the ‘rightness’—of motives, it must be possible

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to find Truth,—the Eternal Truth concerning the character of the Eternal Will. For there is no reason for assigning any limit to the capacity of the moral sense to discern Truth. The absolute motive of the Eternal Will must be the goal of the intuitions of this sublime faculty: on that alone can its approval finally rest with that perfect satisfaction which always results from the apprehension of satisfying Truth.

“I can see no obstacle in the path of any scientific explorer in this field. I can see no reason why any man who takes as his guide the intuitions of the moral sense, and maintains an unswerving loyalty to its intuitive judgments, should fail to arrive at satisfying Truth. All the conditions requisite for the attainment of scientific knowledge seem to me to be as much present here as they are in any other field. Truth is the faculty which has been given us for discernment of this kind of truth, and a faithful record of its judgments cannot fail, I am convinced, to result in the acquirement of true ‘knowledge’ on this subject.

“And, as a matter of fact, the world *has* explored this region of Truth long ago—explored it (I think it is not too much to say) even to its extremest limits. There is really not much left for scientific discovery to accomplish now in this region.

“It is more than three thousand years since this truth concerning motives was discovered and authoritatively proclaimed: ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;’ and the world has not since found any motive of superior nobility—any

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motive to which the final judgment of the moral sense can turn with a feeling of completer satisfaction.

“Even the Great Teacher of Nazareth did but reaffirm, in an age when the light which illumines the moral sense of the world had grown dim, this truth which had already been perceived ages before. His moral teaching disclosed no truth which had not—either in His own or in other nations—been previously placed on record as the result of the intuitive moral judgments of men. We find nearly the whole of the moral teaching of the Sermon on the Mount in the Vedas; we find nothing either there or elsewhere in His teaching, as recorded in the Gospels, which goes beyond that ‘first and greatest commandment’ of Hebraism which I have just quoted.

“This He Himself acknowledged in calling it ‘the first and greatest commandment,’ and in declaring that He came ‘not to destroy the Law and the prophets, but to fulfil them. His mission was not to supplant the old morality by a new one, but to fill the old one up to the full. What He accomplished was not the substitution of a new and higher code of morals for a lower one.\*

“His task was the far more difficult one of making it possible for the world to live up to these

\* “I am regarding Jesus’ mission from a point of view which comprehends all that the world had attained to previously, and simply comparing His moral teaching with the loftiest moral intuitions which were recorded before His time. Comparing it with the moral tone of the age in which He lived, He did undoubtedly substitute a

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lofty intuitions—to attain to these magnificent possibilities to which men's natures testified, but which they had sunk so far below, and, when He came, seemed (and indeed were) powerless to realize.

"The recognition of this fact, and the frank admission that we find in history before His time the record of moral intuitions as lofty as any contained in His moral teachings, cuts the ground from under the feet of those who try to throw discredit on, or at least to minimize, the work He accomplished, by pointing to these previously recorded moral truths and comparing them with those He proclaimed. By thus diligently culling all the best moral flowers which bloomed in the ages before His coming, it is possible to form a bouquet well nigh as fragrant as that which can be gathered from the Gospels. But this, far from detracting from, adds a hundred-fold to, the glory of His work. I am wandering, however, from the line of thought I am attempting to follow.

"I have pointed out that by the aid of the moral sense the world very early discovered—in the region of truth with which it deals—practically all the truth which we at present possess. Even if we leave out of sight the moral truths which the Hebrew writings contain, and confine ourselves to the moral maxims which we find elsewhere, we find that we can add very little to them. The motives upon

higher code of morals for a lower one—but only by reaffirming what had been previously affirmed." This note is written on a loose sheet of paper, not attached to the page, but I have no doubt that it was intended to be inserted here.



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which they lay stress as most worthy of being accepted as incentives to action, are identical with those which any high-minded moralist will feel bound to insist on to-day. Doubtless the amount of truth which had been grasped by different nations and different individuals has varied considerably; and hence have arisen differences in law, customs, and manners which often seem difficult to reconcile with the hypothesis of a universal intuitive moral sense. The hypothesis, however, does not necessitate the assumption that in every individual the moral sense has received the same degree of enlightenment, or is equally sensitive to moral light; indeed, it almost necessitates the contrary assumption. There is quite as much likelihood that differences of endowment and differences of opportunity will be found here, as elsewhere in life.

“The question of the primitive condition of mankind is still *sub judice*. We do not know either in what state of enlightenment or ignorance the moral sense originally was, or how it came to pass that man chose as his guides to action motives of inferior nobility to those of which his moral intuitions expressed approval. Consequently, we do not know whether the moral condition in which we find many nations and races at the present time, or the condition in which many nations and races existed in early ages (a condition in which even the loftiest moral conceptions fall very far short of the highest to which the world has attained) is due to their not having yet arrived at a full knowledge of the truth which the moral sense is capable of apprehending, or to

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their having lost a loftier primitive ideal by unfaithfulness to the light with which it shone.

“But be that as it may, it is an undoubted fact that multitudes of men are born to-day—and have in all ages been born—into a moral environment which at its best has not afforded them opportunities for gaining knowledge of the highest moral truths. Even by the utmost faithfulness to the judgments of their moral sense they have only been able to attain to partial enlightenment. For they have never known the loftiest incentives to action. These have been beyond the range of their experience; in neither life nor thought have they ever encountered them, and consequently their moral sense has never had the opportunity of bearing witness to the light, since it has never known anything but twilight.

“It may be contended that the natural springs of action in human nature, concerning the quality of which the moral sense must be able to affirm as soon as they manifest themselves, will enable every human being to apprehend moral truth up to the limits of the capacity of his nature.

“But there is good reason for supposing that the higher springs of action are not as a rule aroused in men until they become acquainted with the manifestations of these in other personalities. There are doubtless exceptions to this rule; but even if, in a man’s earlier years, promptings to nobility of action are stirred within him which have never met with their counterparts in life or in thought, it is undoubtedly true that in the great majority of cases they soon perish in the uncongenial atmosphere of

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the lower one by which they are surrounded, and the man's moral ideal dwindles to that of his time and nation. And in the majority of cases it never is any higher than this. There have indeed been, in almost every age and nation, exceptional men who have attained to a loftier moral ideal than that with which their environment has acquainted them\*—men whose moral intuitions have exceeded in nobility anything which we can discover in their surroundings. But I think it is not incorrect to say that, as a rule, the light with which a man is illuminated—his moral ideal—is no greater than the light which shines from his environment. The moral ideal of the Hottentot is far below that of the Englishman: he has no opportunities for apprehending many of those higher moral truths which are commonplaces to the latter.

"I venture this thought in explanation of the very considerable differences which we find in the moral ideal among various races. I would not, however, lay too much stress upon it, since the problem is undoubtedly complicated by the fact that, in the case of most men, that which is indispensable to the discernment of truth in this region—faithfulness to the moral intuitions, and the desire to find out truth in the moral region—is absent. And un-

\* "By 'environment' here I mean truth concerning right and wrong, on which men's consciences could pronounce judgment of approval or disapproval, with which they have by any possibility had opportunities of becoming acquainted, either through observation of the conduct of others, or through instruction, or through books."—Footnote in MS.

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faithfulness produces blindness. If a man persistently acts from lower motives when he is conscious of higher ones, the inevitable result will be that the higher ones will cease to appear. So that it is impossible to tell to what extent in any individual the light within him has become darkness because he has refused to recognize it—not because it has never shone.

“Nor is it possible to state to what extent the moral ideal of a race or nation may have deteriorated through a long course of unfaithfulness. Certainly we have many instances in history of the occurrence of this. In this region of truth, no less than in lower regions, it is sternly certain that obedience to the laws of the Universe does not always cause the reactions which are bound to follow to work out their effects on the individual or the generation which has sinned. It is the children who frequently suffer for the sins of their fathers; and in no case do they suffer more than when their fathers’ unfaithfulness to the moral ideal which has been given to them produces its inevitable result—the lowering of the ideal of the succeeding generation. Such a dimming of the lamp of truth causes no less a disaster than a curtailing of the possibilities of life for those to whom it is transmitted (for life’s possibilities are bounded by the moral ideal, and, as I have said, it is seldom that a man has more light than that which comes to him from his environment,) besides bringing upon the heads of those who have been born into the waning light the dire material consequences which always follow, sooner or later, on such departures from truth.

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"History presents us with no more striking illustration of this fact than that which is furnished by the closing scenes of the national history of Israel. The light which it had had become darkness; and how great was the darkness! To what extremes of folly they rushed, into what depths of resultant woe they were plunged, within a few short years of the time when they demonstrated the completeness of their blindness by rejecting the Light of the World!

"It must be honestly confessed that the majority of the facts with which history acquaints us weigh heavily against any theory which attempts to apply the modern doctrine of development in its fulness to mankind. When we attempt to apply it to the moral sense, it breaks down; or, at any rate, it is only rendered valid by supposing the development to be on a scale so vast that the period within which we are as yet enabled to study its progress with accuracy barely enables or permits us to note any advance. The lives of nations and their rise and fall are no more in relation to its onward sweep than the gathering and breaking of a wave on a storm-beaten coast is to the slow advance of the tide;—it is only by widening our horizon to this extent, and, moreover, by encroaching on a region which lies beyond the bounds of clear knowledge, that any such theory can be held.

"For it can by no means be confidently asserted that the world in Jesus Christ's day was not a worse world than it was in the earliest times of which history furnishes us with any record. At any rate, no such marked improvement in its moral

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tone is discernible, as the theory that man in this respect too can be included under the law of development seems to demand.\*

"A distinction, however, must be made between the development of the ideal of the moral sense and the progress made towards its realization.

"With regard to the former, the facts are so conflicting that we can only suspend our judgment till a wider knowledge enables us to reconcile them. For, on the one hand, there are evidences of the existence of a primitive ideal recognized long before the dawn of history, and coming to our knowledge only through traditions, and the fossil thoughts which modern research has unearthed from language. On the other hand, there is the fact that many races exist to-day whose moral conceptions are so rudimentary as almost to preclude the notion that they have ever possessed such an enlightened moral sense as that to which this primitive ideal bears witness, and suggests rather that their moral instincts are at present only in the initial stages of a long and slow development.

"This question, however, is of small importance compared with the other one. It is the question concerning the realization of the ideal with which

\* I make no attempt to hide the discrepancy which exists between this position and the one taken by my friend in the notes I have embodied in Chapter II. (see also Chapter V. The above is undoubtedly the expression of his maturer thinking, and, as will be seen in the subsequent pages, is the result of a fuller examination of the question, and I think, of a clearer apprehension of its difficulties.



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the moral sense illuminates men which is of the greatest moment—in the strictest sense, a vital question.

“It is the lamentable failure of the world to realize the moral ideal, which weighs so heavily against the complete acceptance of the development theory—at any rate, within the lines at present laid down by Science.

“However diligently we may search for indications in the previous history of the race of anything like a regular, orderly advance towards such a consummation, it must be confessed that if it is not altogether wanting, it at any rate has not occurred with anything like the regularity and orderliness demanded by any theory of development which Science would accept. The waves of progress and of retrogression have succeeded one another, and have acted and reacted on one another with a wild complexity which is reducible to no law; and whether the tide is higher now than it appears to have been at the dawn of history is a question which well admits of doubt. Even the Christian centuries are not reducible to order under any law at present recognized by Science (though an undoubted progress towards the realization of the ideal set before the world by Him whose Name they bear is traceable in them); and the Christian centuries are themselves the product of a phenomenon that has been a stumbling-block to all scientific theories of development; all attempts to comprehend it within the domain of law have been hopelessly unsuccessful.

“In considering this question of the realization

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of the moral ideal, we are brought face to face with the greatest problem which has ever presented itself to man for solution.

"The strangest and most startling fact which experience forces on our attention—a fact which has been the standing riddle of time—is this: that the differences between the moral ideals of various ages and races have been small and unimportant compared with the differences which in every individual have manifested themselves between his moral ideal and his conduct.

"A vast discrepancy has always been noticeable all the world over between the motives which men have recognized as most worthy, and those upon which they have habitually acted. Knowledge (however it may have been gained) has always been far ahead of life. Men have known what was morally good and true, and have not chosen it.

"I abstain from speculations concerning the reason for this; the world has had enough and to spare of them in every age. I confine myself to the question—a far more important one—of the remedy for this world-sickness. How are man's actions to be brought up to the level of his moral ideal? How is he to be persuaded or induced (for compulsion is a method which, owing to his possession of free will, we cannot conceive as applicable to him) to act on every occasion from that motive which—of all those which present themselves to his consciousness—is stamped with the approval of his moral sense?

"With this question, moreover, another is intimately associated. For this discrepancy\* between

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the motives of which the moral sense approves, and those which men have ordinarily chosen as guides to action, has produced in them that peculiar feeling which is termed the 'sense of sin.' The instinct which is the guide to truth in this region—which they cannot help acknowledging as the true light given them to pilot their wills through the mazy labyrinths of action—has not failed to record its protests against their departures from the path which it points out.

"It has, moreover, in every age and among all the races of mankind, produced the conviction (though in different degrees of intensity, and expressed in various forms) that the individual is responsible for this departure—that he is 'guilty' in not following the intimations which his moral sense conveys to him, and that he is required to make up for this declension in some way or other, required to make good the difference between what he 'ought' to have done and what he actually has done. This undoubted fact of human experience must, then, be taken into account in any attempt to solve the problem as to how the moral ideal is to be realized. Before a man can be induced to undertake the task of regulating his volitions by the intuitions of the moral sense, he must be relieved of this load of responsibility for past failures in this respect which lies upon him. He must be assured that he will not be for ever handicapped in the pursuit of the ideal by the consequences of this neglect to pursue it previously. He must, moreover (I have avoided stating it thus hitherto, in order, if possible, to maintain the point of view from which I have

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been considering this question, but the full truth cannot be expressed in any other way), be convinced that the Author of the authoritative commands with which the moral sense acquaints him—the Being of whom it makes him directly conscious—forgives the past, and does not demand from him satisfaction for his previous disregard of His voice.

“I do not want now to enter into the question of atonement for sin. It is one of extreme interest and extreme difficulty. I may say, however, that I cannot help thinking that hitherto far too much attention has been paid to men’s subjective impressions concerning their guilt, and far too little to the objective truth concerning the character of the Eternal, with which in its fulness many ideas begotten of ignorance and fear cannot be harmonized. Nor can I help thinking that this question of mere reconciliation has had an importance attached to it, if not out of proportion to men’s immediate needs, yet, at any rate, out of proportion to their ultimately most essential ones.

“Reconciliation with the Eternal as the first step towards the realization of the moral ideal, is indispensable; but life only begins when this is accomplished. It is not the motive which will induce a man to begin the attempt, which is of greatest moment, but the motive which will enable him to keep his will firm to the course of conduct of which his moral sense approves amid all the allurements and temptations which beset him in his walk through life. Unless he comes under the sway of a motive which will enable him to do this, he can

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only stand on the threshold of life; what life in its fulness is, he cannot know.

“Without, then, entering further at present into the question of how men are to be relieved of that sense of guilt which their choice of motives other than those of which the moral sense approves has produced, I will consider the undoubtedly far more important one—How is the moral ideal to be realized?

“Although I have previously acknowledged the existence, and hinted at the character, of that region of Truth which the moral sense apprehends, I have hitherto disregarded its bearings on the problem. I have considered the moral sense simply as the faculty which approves or disapproves of the motives which arise in consciousness, without considering its relations to the Eternal Consciousness, or rather the relations of the Eternal Consciousness to it.

“But thus to contemplate the intuitions of the moral sense without contemplating their Source—to regard the instinct which speaks directly to our wills, and testifies to the existence of a Will outside of us, without taking that Will into account—is to leave out the most important factor of the problem, and to deprive ourselves of all right to expect that we can arrive at satisfying truth.

“Morality and religion cannot be divorced. In an Eternal Will, with whose preferences the moral sense acquaints us, can we alone discover an adequate ground for, and justification of, the judgments which it pronounces. In satisfying relations between ourselves as the possessors of will-power, and

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the Great Personality whose will we know through conscience, can we alone hope to find the solution of the problem as to how we are to attain to the realization of the ideal which the moral sense sets before us—to the life which it summons us to live.

“My justification for not having hitherto regarded the question in this fuller light is the fact that it is just this most important factor which the majority of men ignore—it is just this essential relationship between themselves and the Great Personality which they fail to establish. Often, indeed, they fail even to realize that it is possible to establish it.

“Philosophically, there is no reason, so far as I can see, why men should not be able, by faithfulness to the intuitions of the moral sense, to bring themselves into perfect harmony with the Eternal Will,—no reason why they should not be able to attain to complete obedience to that Will through a frank recognition of the infinite worth and beauty of the life of relations with it, coupled with strenuous endeavours to cultivate that life.

“And in point of fact, some men have gone a considerable way in this direction. If they have not achieved all that we can deem it possible for human nature to achieve, they have at least advanced so far beyond the majority that the world recognizes their achievements by ranking them as her noblest sons. Their conceptions of the moral ideal have been accepted as the loftiest which have ever been known; their attitude towards the Eternal has been recognized as the most fitting which men can assume; and the life to which they



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have attained has been deemed the noblest and most satisfying which men can live.

"I have more particularly in my mind the prophets and psalmists of the Hebrew nation. The world still finds inspiration in the moral ideal which was the goal of their aspirations; still derives help from the utterances which their passionate desire to realize it forced from their lips; still sees, in their conceptions of the Eternal, and in the attitude which they assumed towards Him, food for reverent contemplation, and example for zealous imitation.

"Nevertheless, it can, I think, hardly fail to be admitted that in this last respect (*i. e.* the attaining to complete and joyful obedience to the Will which the moral sense makes us conscious of) the record contained in the Old Testament writings leaves much to be desired. And at this point of my inquiry at which I have arrived, it is the most important that a thoroughly satisfactory answer should be found to the question as to whether such an attainment is possible for man.

"It is true that these men could sing, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want;' and, 'I love Thee, O Lord, my Strength. The Lord is my Rock and my Fortress and my high Deliverer; my God, my strong Tower, in Him will I trust; my Shield, and the Horn of my salvation; my high Tower;' and, 'Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him;' and, 'I delight to do Thy will, O my God, yea, Thy Law is within my heart;' and, 'I have no good beyond Thee. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is

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fulness of joy, in Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.'

"Thus—and in many other utterances too numerous to quote, plentifully interspersed through the Psalms and the prophetic books—did these men give expression to their trust and confidence and delight in the Eternal. But still we do not find that continuously joyful confidence, that perfectly reposeful trust, that fulness of conviction, not only that obedience to the Eternal Will would lead to life, but that it *was* life, which we can alone deem perfectly satisfactory. Nor do we find that bright, glad, intelligent service rendered which should, nay, *must* be rendered to a perfect Being perfectly known and loved.

"Such a trust, such a knowledge, such an obedience as this will, I take it, alone completely satisfy human needs, human desires, human capabilities; and to this the Hebrew prophets and seers, grand and noble as they undoubtedly were, did not attain.

"There is in their writings a note of doubt, to match nearly every note of trust; a cry for light, to match nearly every declaration of confident assurance; a confession of ignorance, to match nearly every avowal of knowledge; an acknowledgement of blind adhesion to a rule of right not yet perfectly understood, to match nearly every outburst of intelligent enthusiasm for the Divine commandments. Their service was not perfect freedom, not the willing obedience of sons: to a completely satisfying relationship with the Eternal they did not attain.

"And indeed, a difficulty in the way of arriving

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at satisfying truth by the only path which was open to them, becomes evident here—a difficulty which we must not overlook.

“Human nature is the only field which presents itself to our view wherein appear those motives which are the objects of the judgments of the moral sense. Man is the only measure of the Eternal. Nowhere else but to manhood can we look with any hope of discovering that upon which the moral intuition exercises its powers. Is, then, the Eternal only to be discovered by our discovering ourselves? Is the moral quality of the Eternal Will to be gauged only by the quality of the motives which present themselves to our consciousness? Is the Eternal Righteousness to be apprehended only to the extent to which human nature embodies it? Is the fulness of the Eternal Love to be indicated only by that poverty of love which human hearts display?

“The admission that through the moral sense we come into direct touch with the Not-Ourselves—the recognition of the fact that we are immediately conscious of the Eternal Will—would at first sight seem to enable us to escape this difficulty. If on this side of man’s nature there is a door opening directly on the Infinite, is there any reason why the infinite fulness should not flow into him and saturate him with its perfect essence? is there any reason why he should not apprehend the quality of the Eternal Will to the extremest limits of truth?

“To which I have already replied, ‘Philosophically, no reason.’

“If it is possible directly to commune with the Eternal, we cannot assign any limits to the fulness

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of that communion; its possibilities are as exhaustless as His own infinitude; and if this communion had received no *check*—if this door to the infinite had not been shut—the difficulty I have suggested would never have presented itself.

“But for some reason, which, as I have before remarked, has baffled the wisdom of the most thoughtful men in all ages, and still remains the standing riddle of time—this communion has been checked, this door has been shut—or at any rate half closed; so that even in those cases in which communion with the Eternal has been most deep, a feeling has remained that a satisfying fulness has not been reached—a feeling that the quality of the Eternal Will could not be adequately gauged by the quality of even the noblest motives which arose in consciousness; that some clearer vision of truth was needed in order that the hunger of the moral sense might be appeased, and man’s aspirations be satisfied.

“It is assuredly a most striking and significant fact that the very nation which attained to the loftiest moral ideal the world has known, and to the fullest sense of communion with the Eternal, was the one which possessed the strongest desire for a fuller revelation of His nature and character, and the most confident hope that this desire would be realized.

“In other nations also we find the desire and the hope appearing that some type of the Eternal would come amongst them to whom they could look as the Embodiment of a perfect ideal—as the Satisfier of all human aspirations and needs; but in no nation

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have they ever been so intense and so clear as they were in the Hebrew nation.

"We find the hope appearing in the very dawn of their history that One would appear who would fulfil all righteousness, and establish a kingdom as wide as the world. We find that expectation and hope growing continually clearer and more confident during the thousand years of the nation's rise, decline, and fall. We find it surviving the destruction of all their earthly hopes, and strongest and clearest at the very time when—within a very few years of the total extinction of their national life—He appeared whom all the centuries since have acknowledged to be the crown and flower of our race—the ideal Man, the perfect type and pattern of the Eternal.

"I have deemed it necessary to enter into this digression in order to make it clear to what extent a steady pursuit of the moral ideal can enable men to win satisfying truth in that region with which the moral sense brings them into touch, and to what extent it can enable them to establish satisfactory and satisfying relations between themselves and the Great Personality.

"We see that it leaves much to be desired, both with regard to the perfection of the moral ideal itself, and also with regard to the fulness and complete satisfyingness of the relations which it enables men to establish with the Eternal. We find that the amount of knowledge and of communion to which men have attained has, even in the best instances, fallen far short of that for which they have hoped and longed. And it must be noted that that

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mysterious deflection of the will from the steady pursuit of the moral ideal to which I have previously referred manifested itself even in the case of those who pursued moral good most eagerly, and fatally hindered them in their endeavours to attain to perfection.

“And if this was the case with those for whom the door into the infinite stood widest open, and who displayed the strongest desire to conform to the moral ideal, how much more was it the case with the majority of our race? For, as I have said, in the case of the majority that door is shut. The majority of men have never understood the relation which exists between the voice of conscience within them and the Living Fact without them. They have never established a correspondence between their moral sense and its proper environment. They have had no desire to correspond. Their choice of motives has been persistently contrary to their moral intuitions. They have strayed far away from the path in which conscience seeks to lead them, and have chosen to follow other guides than the one appointed by Heaven. The inevitable result of this course of action has been that the intuitions of the moral sense have been thrown into opposition. Conscience has been deprived of her rightful position of ruler, and has been constrained to limit herself to protestations. She cannot help bearing witness to the light, but her witness, to those who have turned away from the light, has been compelled to take the form of warning, reproof, and stern condemnation,—of imperative commands to do or to abstain from doing this or that. Of these



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commands the latter kind, of necessity, predominate, for the 'thou shalt not's' must inevitably speak louder than the 'thou shalt's' to the man who has revolted from the authority of Conscience.

"This attitude of stern, unreasoning command which, in the majority of men, Conscience has been compelled to adopt, both tends to produce, and is the result of (it is really impossible to say now whether it should be accounted a cause or an effect) their ignorance of the environment of which it speaks.

"The intuitions of the moral sense have ceased to appear reasonable, because most men have ceased to be in vital touch with the environment of which it makes them conscious, and do not correspond with it. Consequently, these intuitions no longer present themselves to men as indications of vast and wonderful possibilities of life, but only as unreasonable intimations that such and such a course of conduct 'ought' to be followed or shunned. And the environment to which they testify ceases to present itself to them as good—as being on its own account infinitely worthy of being sought for, delighted in, and loved; it only appears to them as that which 'must' be paid attention to (to some extent), owing to its ceaseless importunity of authoritative command.

"In other words (for it is impossible by the use of the scientific term 'environment,' to state the truth fully), man has ceased to regard the intuitions of the moral sense as intimations of the truth respecting the will of the Eternal, which it is his glorious privilege to know and to do. He has ceased

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(or failed) to realize that to do that will is necessary to the perfection of his being. And that essential conviction being lost (or never gained; the corporate character of the race impresses itself upon one so strongly in the consideration of this question, that he is rather apt to speak as if he were attributing responsibility where he is only describing effects), all sorts of doubts concerning the goodness of that will (which would never have appeared had not man shut the door between himself and it) have filled his soul. Communion with the Eternal being stopped, knowledge about Him was all that remained possible—knowledge at all removes from Truth.

“Hence men have regarded the Eternal as the Avenger, the stern Law-giver, the strict Judge, because these conceptions alone have harmonized with the forms which the intuitions of the moral sense have assumed. They are distortions of the truth—the spawn of ignorance and fear. They are possible only when men have no vital relations with Truth, when the door between them and the Eternal is shut, when the desire to follow the intuitions of the moral sense is absent (or, at any rate, when there is no realization of the relation in which these intuitions stand to Life). In this condition, men hear in conscience only the voice of warning and reproof, and the imperative call to obedience; they do not recognize it as the call to fellowship with the Eternal, and to a free and intelligent service in the bonds of mutual affection.

“This, then, is the condition in which the majority of men actually are. They have no correspondence

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with the environment with which their moral sense acquaints them; they have no true knowledge of the fact which it, and it alone, is capable of apprehending. As far as this part of their nature is concerned, they are dead—the voice of Conscience in them being no more than the stifled cry of a crushed and outraged instinct ever craving for the satisfaction which is denied it. We are well enough acquainted with the extremes of hunger to which this instinct is sometimes reduced. We know that in some cases it has been so crushed that it has well-nigh ceased to feel the pangs of hunger at all, and has been as nearly extinguished as any original instinct in our nature can be. We know, too, what crude, and distorted, and erroneous conceptions of the Eternal men have had, and, indeed, still have—conceptions which invariably coexist with a low state of moral development;\* conceptions which are utterly unworthy of the Creator of the universe, and altogether out of harmony with the instincts, and irreconcilable with the requirements, of an enlightened nature.

“These are facts. This is the sober truth concerning man—as we ordinarily find him—compared, or rather contrasted, with what a careful examination of his nature, in the light of other facts with which history supplies us, compel us to conclude that he may become. They are facts which must be taken into account and allowed their due weight by all who seriously study human nature. Not one of

\* “Invariably, I believe, in men’s inmost minds, though not always acknowledged in their professions of belief.”—Footnote in MS.

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them can be overlooked: no solution of this problem which they present (the necessity of making a clear statement of this problem before attempting a solution has compelled me to examine them in detail) can be deemed worthy of notice which does not do justice to all of them, and suggest an adequate remedy.

"This problem, as I have before stated it, is—How is the moral ideal to be realized? But inasmuch as our examination has forced us to the conclusion that, in order fully to satisfy man's capabilities, and to fulfil his aspirations and longings, this ideal itself, even in the loftiest form in which men have known it, needs expansion (and can we assign any limits to that expansion short of infinity?), this also must be taken into account in offering our solution.

"Let us briefly review the factors of the problem.

"We require (1) the moral idea to be expanded till it affords adequate satisfaction to the limitless ambition of man (2) A sufficient remedy for the sense of guilt. (3) The re-establishment of correspondence between man's moral sense and its proper environment.

"This last involves, and may be subdivided into, (a) the bringing of man to the recognition of the fact that the intimations concerning conduct which Conscience conveys to him are for his good—that the moral instincts point the way to the best, the highest, and the fullest life; or, to state it in another way, that it is altogether good and delightful to do the will of the Eternal; and (b) the placing at man's disposal (or perhaps it will be more correct to say,

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the bringing of him under the attractive influence) of a power strong enough to draw his will away from the sway of motives of which the moral sense disapproves—*i. e.* to back up the intuitions of the moral sense by a motive-power under the influence of which man shall be led to pursue virtue with a passionate and absorbing delight, even as he now pursues lower ends, such as wealth or fame.

“This last factor of the problem, indeed, well deserves more attention than I have hitherto bestowed upon it. It was the factor which baffled the wisdom of the greatest philosophers of the ancient world. How to create the desire for virtue; how to right the bias of the will, and enable men to follow after and delight in ‘the good,’ as the moral sense revealed it to them;—that was a problem which they had to confess to be insoluble. What ‘the good’ was, they saw by no means indistinctly; but how to induce the great mass of men who were pursuing far other ends to make it the goal of their endeavours, they could not discover.

“Most pathetic is Aristotle’s admission concerning the probable effect of his teachings on the world. ‘Some few,’ he says, ‘who are disposed to virtue may profit somewhat by these discourses of mine, but on the majority, who are wholly given up to the pursuit of pleasure, they can exert no influence whatever.’\* ”

“This confession, by the wisest of the ancients, of inability, by any inculcation of virtue, to win over the mass of men to what was good, is striking

\* My friend is evidently quoting from memory. The passage he refers to is in the “Ethics” (chap. x. sec. 10).

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in many ways. It shows how early Philosophy discovered her inability to accomplish that moral reformation, the need for which she so clearly saw. It is a confession of the greatness of man's need, and of her powerlessness to meet it; and, admitting this, it almost compels the question—Is there no outside help to be looked for? What is the truth concerning the 'Not-Ourselves' of which the moral sense speaks, and is it not possible to find *there* a motive-power strong enough to turn the will to virtue, and to enable man to accomplish the realization of the moral ideal?

"I have already pointed out how entirely the majority of men fail to take into account—or, at any rate, rightly and adequately to estimate the importance of—this Fact outside themselves to which the moral sense bears witness; and I have endeavoured to state the utmost truth concerning it at which it is possible to arrive by an examination of the facts which pre-Christian history records.

"We cannot, indeed, wonder that ancient Philosophy ignored this side of the truth; for Philosophy simply endeavours, by a study of the facts of consciousness, to ascertain what the truth about human nature is, and the facts known to the ancient philosophers presented nothing which could enable them to arrive at satisfying conclusions. For, as I have said, the door between the moral intuitions and the truth was shut. There was no correspondence between these and their proper environment in the consciousness of those from whom the ancient philosophers deduced their conclusions, and consequently the only estimate they could arrive at con-



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cerning that environment was an imperfect and inadequate one.

"And it is unfortunately true that modern Philosophy has almost exclusively adopted the same standpoint, and only argued from the same facts as those which were at the service of her elder sister.

"A philosophy deducted from a *Christian* consciousness has not yet been constructed. Whether it is the fault of Philosophy or Religion, need not now be considered, but undoubtedly Philosophy hitherto has not given due attention to, nor adequately estimated the importance of, the phenomena of the Christian consciousness; nor have those who have devoted themselves to the study of this consciousness accomplished the task of reconciling their conclusions with those at which their co-explorers in the broad fields of human nature have arrived.

"The materials are there; but they have been used to erect two separate edifices: the construction with them of a spacious temple in which the most enlightened mind and consciousness can dwell has yet to be accomplished.

"This, however, is a digression.

"I return to my inquiry—Can we find in the environment with which (as apprehended by the consciousness of the noblest souls of the Hebrew race) the moral sense has enabled the world to become acquainted, any ground for hope that it will supply motive-power which will enable (or persuade) man to pursue virtue as the chief end of life?

"To this question, having regard solely to the facts we have already examined, I do not think we can give an altogether satisfactory answer. The

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motive-power which impelled the prophets and saints of the Hebrew nation to pursue the moral ideal—the impulse which led them to desire righteousness so earnestly, and to ‘thirst for the living God’ so passionately—is a power whose whence and whither we know not. Only a select few of that select nation felt its influence. They did not themselves understand it. It came upon them from beyond their wills, and sometimes (as in the case of Jonah) compelled them against their wills; and they called it ‘the Spirit of the Lord.’

“The wisdom of two thousand years has been able to understand it no better, nor to call it by any better name. ‘Inspiration’ men have named it—the breaking in upon them from the beyond of a Spirit which took supreme possession of their wills, and made them the vehicles of Its influence, the channels for Its purposes.

“Clearly, however, such a mysterious and uncertain agency as that cannot be relied upon for the regeneration of the world. A power which comes to some men only, cannot, with any confidence, be trusted as the influence which shall enable men to realize the moral ideal which Conscience sets before them. Nor can we rely on its transmitted influence. Its presence in many souls of the Hebrew race did not prevent that race from suffering moral decay, did not avert national ruin; and we are not warranted in supposing that elsewhere its indirect influence will be more efficacious.

“Moreover, let those who will deprecate such suggestions and urge the inscrutability of the ‘Divine decrees,’ we cannot (unless we regard it as simply a

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preparation for something more satisfactory which is to follow) avoid grave doubts as to the justice of such an arbitrary bestowal or withholding of this much-to-be-desired power. Nor can we (unless our supposition is correct, that it is only a forecast and foretaste of a fuller revelation of a power to be placed some day within the reach of all) reconcile it with the truth concerning the Eternal in the possession of which the world has been placed by those who by this mysterious Influence have been led to know Him.

“For these reasons, therefore, the question—What hope is there that the ‘Not-Ourselves’ with which man comes in contact in Conscience will supply the motive-power which he needs before he can conform his will to these intuitions? can receive, in the light of the facts which the history of the Hebrew nation supplies, only a tentative answer. There is hope, but not full assurance of hope; or, rather, it is only hope; we must search elsewhere to discover whether it has been realized or not. The power which was given to these men was not such as the whole world can lay hold of; but perchance it was the forerunner of some power accessible to all. The knowledge which it enabled these men to gain strengthens this surmise, nay, demands its realization, but does not actually disclose the source from whence it is to spring: it only anticipates it with earnest longing.

“‘The Eternal is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy;’ ‘Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Eternal pitieth them that fear Him;’ ‘Let the wicked forsake his

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way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Eternal, and He will have mercy upon him, even to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.' How can such a revelation of the character of the Will that speaks in conscience stop short of the unfolding of a means by which not only the chosen men of a chosen nation, but every being in whom the voice of Conscience—however feebly—speaks, shall be put in the possession of power which shall enable him to conform to the voice within—enable him to attain to that life of conscious oneness with the Eternal of which it is the promise, and to which its sternest command is the most passionate call?

"But what kind of power is conceivable which can thus act on the will? and of what kind must we conceive in order that our conception shall harmonize with the knowledge of the Eternal which we already have?

"Evidently (to take these questions in the order in which I have stated them) it must be a *motive* of some kind; for compulsion is out of the question where free will is concerned. It must be an impulse to action aroused by some want (perhaps it is more correct to say, springing from some original capability) of the nature—not necessarily what we *have been* capable of, but what we *can be* capable of, if a sufficient inducement presents itself, if a suitable object of desire appears.

"Moreover, it must be a motive stronger than any of those which at present sway the will; otherwise we cannot conceive of the will being drawn away from these. It must be a deeper desire, an

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intenser hunger, a more absorbing passion, than any other which arises in consciousness; attracting the will to follow after that which will best relieve and satisfy it with an attractive power capable of overcoming all resisting influences.

"It is evident, from a glance at humanity as we ordinarily find it, that no such supreme motive has ever arisen in the consciousness of the majority of men in association with the intuitions of the moral sense. Nay, we can say of many men that no motive to which we can attribute sufficient power to accomplish this task, if associated with the dictates of conscience, has ever been stirred within them all.

"From deeper depths of consciousness than have ever yet been stirred, by vaster and more fundamental needs than any they have yet experienced, must these motives come, this impulse be imparted, which shall have power to turn the will from the pursuit of lower ends to the pursuit of the good which the intuitions of the moral sense apprehend.

"But has no motive ever been stirred in any consciousness to which we can attribute sufficient power to draw the will, with a supreme attraction, away from all other pursuits to those which will most completely satisfy the want from which it has sprung? Is there no primary need of our nature which, once felt, sways the will with complete control, and impels it to seek to satisfy it even at the expense of all other desires?

"Yes, there is one such motive—a motive which in every age has been strong enough to sway the will with supreme power. It is a motive arising

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from a craving of our nature which, though debased and degraded by the abuse of its holiest sacrament, has yet continued capable of producing the intensest longing and agony when unsatisfied, and the keenest joy and delight when meeting with adequate response, of any of which the possibilities of our being permit. It is a motive which has continually shown itself supreme in its influence over life, and in its power to mould character, lifting men into the loftiest heights of nobility and blessedness, or plunging them into the lowest depths of sin and woe, by the might of its own matchless strength.

“I refer to the passion of love—that unique reciprocal influence and correspondence which it is possible to establish between ourselves and another self; that deep-seated desire and craving which has, especially in the form in which it is usually met with—the love between man and woman—shown itself in every age the most potent of all the forces which stir our nature.

“The analyst of the springs of action which arise in consciousness may object to classify it as a simple motive, or to refer it to any primary want of our being, on account of the great variety and complexity of those feelings and desires with which it is associated. And certainly an emotion which spreads itself over the whole field of possible achievement which human nature can exercise itself in—a motive which can attach itself to any or all of the other motives which arise in consciousness, and make them feel its kindling touch, cannot be considered of the same order as these. But to me this seems to be rather a proof of its central and primary



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character than the reverse—a proof that it is fundamental and unique; an original affection of our personality: a deep-seated need in which all other needs are swallowed up and lost: a craving which can only be satisfied by the combined ministry of all our faculties and powers. It seems to arise in deeper regions of consciousness than are stirred within us by any other object of desire which the Universe offers; it seems to come upon all the other motives from behind, and to intensify each or all of them by a unique and peculiar power of its own. It seems to be central and essential to the soul of man.

“If I am correct in assigning this central and fundamental position to the passion of love—if it is a spiritual affection, twin-sister to faith, pertaining to the ego, and not otherwise definable than as an original capability thereof—we can understand this unique influence which it exerts over all other parts of man’s nature, and over life.

“Pertaining to what man is, not to what he has, its importance is proportionate to the relative worth of these two. And since the whole of the latter is subservient to the former, it cannot but hold itself in readiness, in each and all its parts, to minister to this supreme need.

“But this aspect of the question is too far removed from my present subject to permit me to follow its intricacies. This is the selfward aspect, in which direction indeed the majority of men look, trying to find in themselves satisfaction for this craving of their spirits; but none the less it is a fatally wrong direction in which to look, as suicidal,

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indeed, as the fabled attempt of the eagle to feed on its own vitals.

“For we are not gods, capable of sustaining and satisfying ourselves from ourselves, but must continually look without—to the non-ego—in order to find satisfaction for the cravings of our natures.

“But like alone can satisfy like; the environment must be of equal rank with the faculty in order to be able to meet and supply its cravings. Therefore it is not in things, but in *persons*—in beings similarly constituted to ourselves—that we can alone discover an environment capable of satisfying this fundamental craving which belongs to our personality—that we can alone find corresponding depths to answer to the echoing deeps of our own being. And this enables us to understand why the quality of love varies so greatly—even of that love which looks away from self and centres itself in another. (Much that passes by that name even in the relations between persons, is only a self-love.) Its quality depends upon what each finds in the other to support love’s cravings, to satisfy love’s need, and ultimately, and before long too, it adjusts itself to this—the amount of that in the beloved which it can discover worthy of reverence and esteem; in other words, to the amount, real or imagined (one is obliged to put in that clause to cover those cases in which true love lavishes itself on unworthy objects; they are not unworthy in love’s eyes), of moral worth which the personality possesses.

“It is this which gives love such power to elevate or debase the possessor; to strengthen, purify, and

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ennoble, or to weaken and corrupt. The passion of love draws mutually affected souls to a level with an attractive power of resistless strength. Those under its influence ever tend to become like the object on which their passion is centred.

“Thou art mated to a clown,  
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag  
thee down.’

“With which compare, in the same poem—

“Love took up the harp of life, and smote on all the  
chords with might;  
Smote the chord of self that, trembling, pass’d in music  
out of sight.’

“We arrive, then, at this conclusion in answer to the question—What conceivable kind of power is there which is capable of acting supremely on the will?—

“We find that it must be a motive arising from some original and fundamental craving of the nature, which impels the will with supreme power to act in such ways as shall best bring it satisfaction, because it is felt to be a supreme need. And we find that one such motive, arising from one such felt need, is present in human nature—the desire and craving to love and to be loved—which, moreover (an important fact to be kept in view in relation to our main inquiry), has always exerted an ennobling influence on the life in proportion as the beloved one has been *good*.

“Therefore (let us draw this necessary conclusion at once) a supreme love, manifested in con-

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junction with a supreme goodness, will be able to accomplish the task of righting the bias of the will and inducing it to undertake the realization of the moral ideal.

“And having got thus far, I need only say a very few words in answer to the question—What kind of power must we conceive of in order that our conceptions may be in harmony with the conclusions which we have already arrived at concerning the Living Will with which we are acquainted through the intuitions of the moral sense?—

“There is one power, and one only, worthy of emanating from that Eternal Spirit whose will the Hebrew seers so clearly apprehended; there is one revelation, and one only, which will crown and complete their conceptions of Him, and fulfil the hopes and longings which possessed their souls. If the depths of the Eternal Personality are filled with infinite *love*—if anywhere we can find proof, by being able to point anywhere in humanity to the spectacle of measureless love in conjunction with spotless purity, that God indeed is Love—then, and only then, are all human needs met, all conceptions crowned, all hopes, longings, and aspirations realized.

“To sum up once more before I draw the evident and long-foreseen conclusion to which this train of thought has been leading me, we want—

“(1) For the completion of the moral ideal—a perfect character.

“(2) For the removal of the sense of guilt—a ground for the expectation of forgiveness.

“(3) For the will—a supreme motive.

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“(4) for the heart—boundless love.

“And without hesitation I say, they are all to be found in the Man Christ Jesus; more especially in that amazing deed wherewith He crowned and consummated His life and His life-work—His death on the cross.

“I find myself altogether unable to exhaust the perfections of that perfect Man. I can assign no limits to the forgiving mercy of the loving Father whom He revealed. I cannot fathom the depths of that self-renouncing love which led Him to the cross. I yield to its constraining power. It impels me, with a force my will cannot resist, to strive to do those things which will please Him best, and thus transforms me into the image of His matchless perfection, and lifts me into the fulness of His life. The more I ponder His life and His death, the more am I constrained to say, ‘Verily in Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.’ I can conceive of, can imagine, can crave for, no truth which I do not find in Him. My whole being—heart, and mind, and soul—prostrates itself in utter reverence—in an ecstasy of awful joy—before that manifestation of the Real, the Eternal Fact, GOD.

“Art Thou even thus, O infinite Spirit! Is this Thy Life! Is it Thou who hast made me and the universe—Thou, in whose embrace I lie: in the hollow of whose hand creation rests?

“Oh, wonderful beyond all power of conception! Oh, beautiful beyond all power of imagining! Oh, blissful beyond all capacity of feeling! O Life, how good Thou art! MY GOD, MY FATHER!”

## CHAPTER VIII

### LOVE

I HAVE now reached the last stage of the task to which I committed myself when I undertook the duty of editing my friend's MSS.

I have endeavoured, in the previous chapters, to give the reader such selections from my friend's writings as would enable him to trace the development of his thinking. I have at the same time striven to keep in view the purpose which these fragmentary writings were originally intended to serve. I have confined my attention to this two-fold aim, and in doing so have been compelled to put aside much interesting matter which I have found among the MSS., because it did not seem to me to come within the scope of this aim.

The attempt I have made is necessarily a very imperfect one, but I am not without hope that it has not been wholly unsuccessful.

The reader will, I trust, have gathered from the previous pages that my friend had a strong leaning towards the scientific—*i.e.* the inductive—method of inquiry. This led him at first to favour those views of life which are so frequently found associated with scientific pursuits. But he could not rest at the point at which most scientific men stop in their inductions. He could not accept as satis-



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factory those conclusions which have been so largely accepted by modern Science and modern Philosophy as ultimate ones. He could not believe that the Power which Science finds behind phenomena is unknowable. He was led, alike by the cravings of his nature and by his reverence for facts—many of which, especially in the region of morals and religion, seemed to him to demand more satisfactory explanations than Science and Philosophy offered—to seek for fuller and deeper knowledge. Still following the inductive method, he proceeded to examine those deeper regions of his nature, of which his consciousness gave evidence; and the facts which he there discovered he brought face to face with corresponding facts in the field of human life.

The reader has already had opportunities of seeing where his investigations ultimately led him. He will have seen from the last note of the previous chapter that they brought him to Jesus Christ as the perfect Revealer of the character of God, and to His cross as the pledge and gauge of the love of the Eternal. The measure of the fulness of life which is possible to man he found to be “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” The power which is alone capable of enabling man to attain to it, he found to be “the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” He beheld all the lines of truth converge in Him, and rested there with the confidence of perfect faith, and the joyousness of inextinguishable hope.

Having, then, in such an imperfect manner as the great difficulty of the task, and the smallness of my own skill, has permitted, put before the reader

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such of my friend's thoughts as seemed to me to show best the steps by which he arrived at this conviction, it only remains for me to add a few notes in which are expressed some of his thoughts about that life of love which both his thinking and his spiritual experience led him to regard as the true life for man.

I have accordingly gleaned from his MSS. such jottings and fragments as seemed to me most fully to reveal his feelings and convictions—the completeness of his satisfaction, the bright and joyful serenity which diffused itself over his whole life, and the calm and trustful confidence with which he met life's trials and faced life's mystery.

The reader will doubtless have caught some by no means uncertain notes in this strain sounded in some of the extracts I have already given; but he will not, I trust, deem these additional ones superfluous, or regard them as forming an unfitting ending to this record.

The following meditation on love may fairly claim the first place:—

“The depths of the living spirit of man can be fathomed by no intellectual plummet. The mind is the organ of the spirit, and cannot comprehend it. Thought mirrors, but cannot measure, life. Let the intellect bluster as it will, and give itself airs of superiority, it is still only a servant; let it pry as it will into the secrets of its master, there are some it will never be able to discover. To depict life in terms of thought has been man's endeavour from the earliest times; in every age he has renewed

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the attempt, only to find anew that he is attempting the impossible.

“Under the vague terms ‘feeling’ and ‘emotion,’ with which Philosophy endeavours to hide her inability to comprehend the deeper regions of the nature of man, is included by far the most important half of his conscious life. All that is central and fundamental to the ego is embraced in these terms; all the unfathomable depths and incomprehensibility of personality—of the soul of man—lies behind them.

“If, then, we enter this region, and endeavour to set forth in words our conceptions concerning it—to mirror in thought some features of this soul-life—our failure to do justice to it is a foregone conclusion. In this inexhaustible mine Thought has quarried since the dawn of time; the vast and varied literature of the world is the result of this quarrying; yet is the vein as far as ever from being worked out, for the soul of man is infinite.

“Of all the feelings and emotions which belong to this region of man’s being, that which we denominate ‘love’ holds the highest rank.

“We cannot define this feeling. It is an original and fundamental capacity of the personality; a primary instinct of the ego; a faculty native and peculiar to the soul.

“There is only one other spiritual capacity which will bear comparison with it, namely faith; but the two are only parts of one indivisible whole—different sides of the central energy of the spirit. In thought it is possible, and even necessary, to distinguish them; but in life they are invariably united.

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“Faith is that portion of the Soul’s activity which, working downward, buries itself in fact, and, rooted there, affords a firm basis on which the other portion—the active life of love—can rest, and freely exercise itself. Faith is the unseen portion of the Soul’s bark, which keeps her steady as she rides on the sea of life. Or is the hidden rock, firmly planted, on which the light of love securely and perpetually burns. But the ship is one, whether portions of it be above or below the water; and were there no rock there would be no light.

“Love, the upward and active portion of the Soul’s energy, is the supreme power and the supreme need of man’s nature. It is a craving deeper than all other cravings, a want which embraces all other wants. There is no form of human activity in which you cannot trace the presence of this energy of the spirit, this Soul-hunger, this passion and need of love.

“Love is essentially a personal relationship. Only in a person can it find a fit object on which to lavish its wealth; only from a living spirit can it derive the satisfaction for which it craves.

“This is an eternal and infinite truth—the truth of life. But it is a truth which man has been slow to apprehend. Few have attained to the knowledge of it, even in the lower walks of life—even with regard to human love; and only a few here and there, of all the world’s countless millions, have apprehended it in the inexhaustible regions of the Divine Love.

“For, as we behold it in life, love rarely attains to the highest degree of purity and nobility, and it

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rarely finds that which will alone give it true and lasting satisfaction. Whether it fixes its gaze on finite beings or on the Infinite Being—whether it seeks to satisfy itself with the wealth of a kindred soul, or with the wealth which the Eternal Love outpours so bountifully and unceasingly upon humanity—it rarely penetrates to essentials; it rarely fastens itself upon what is eternal and immutable. It is attracted and ensnared by externals. It seeks satisfaction in the form, not in the substance; in the outward beauty, not in the inward grace; in what is material, not in what is spiritual; in what is earthly, not in what is heavenly.

“Hence the world’s misery and unrest. It is the result of this fatal folly; it is the inevitable consequence of the misuse of Heaven’s noblest gift—of man’s foul sin in selling his birthright for a mess of pottage.

“The spirit hungers for love. But even as in that love which it displays towards the finite objects of its choice, it too often attempts to nourish itself on superficial and transitory characteristics, instead of rooting itself in fundamental spiritual excellences, so is it with the Infinite Object of its choice, which displays itself to the hungry soul in all the boundless material, intellectual, and spiritual wealth which man beholds in the universe.

“The Soul, beholding the apparently inexhaustible riches of the sphere which first meets her gaze, and feeling what capacity she has for disporting herself in it, grows proud. She fancies that she is a god, self-contained. She falls in love with herself. ‘What need have I to look beyond myself?’

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she cries : 'will not these servants of mine—my body and my mind—supply my utmost need?'

"And so she sets them seeking for that wherewith to satisfy herself. Urged by the wild hunger within, she pursues phantoms—pleasure, or wealth, or fame—which she vainly supposes will be able to satisfy her supreme need. In her huge self-delusion, she will not believe that they are phantoms, though they vanish as she clasps them. In her insane self-love, she still believes she can satisfy herself thus, though every bubble bursts as she touches it.

"O foolish soul! to think that by thus grasping at the mantle of the Eternal, while all the time thine eyes are turned upon thyself, and thou seest not the Divine Form enshrouded in it, nor art conscious of the Living Heart which beats beneath it, thou canst steal the virtue which shall soothe and heal thy woes! Thou art doomed to wander through the universe, seeking rest and finding none, till thou hast learnt to forget thyself—till thou hast lost thy life in the lives of thy brother men, and in the life of Him who gave His life for thee!

"Not but that the outward and material has its uses. In its fitting time and place it can do the Soul noble service. Not all at once does man—the heir of the Infinite—become acquainted with his own capacities, or apprehend the full measure and extent of the wealth which is his birthright. Heaven makes no haste. She gives her nursling a long education, and inducts him slowly into the fulness of life which she has in store for him. She long detains him in the outer courts of her temple,



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and occupies his attention with her gaudier and less precious treasures. 'First that which is natural, afterwards that which is spiritual,' is the great law of human development. Therefore is it right that beauty and superficial characteristics should first attract the lover to the maid, and that the world of matter and not the world of spirit should first engross the attention of the budding soul.

"But outward shows—mere clothing and garniture—whether of finite spirit or of the Infinite Spirit, cannot satisfy the cravings of the Soul of man. They only serve to point the way to the inner temple—to the Living Reality which they enshrine.

"'Love born of beauty soon as beauty dies,'

unless it has, before this inevitable decay of the outward has occurred, discovered and transferred its devotion to that inward and spiritual beauty which can never die—unless it has discovered the Living, Immortal Spirit clothed in the beauty of holiness, and palpitating with the rapturous throbbings of undying love.

"This alone is the goal of love; nothing short of this can satisfy the hunger of the Soul, whether the finite or the Infinite be the object of its desire. It cannot satisfy itself with things; it cannot nourish itself upon externals—upon the types and shadows of the Real. It must find a Living Heart, dowered with a wealth of affection, animated by a passion of longing equal to its own. Love alone can satisfy the cravings of love—love, which is the

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unique and peculiar endowment of the living spirit of man.

“‘Clothed in the beauty of holiness,’ I said; for some vesture the Soul must wear, some form she must assume, in order to body forth her incomprehensible essence.

“And that vesture is most fitting which most completely and beautifully clothes her; that form is noblest which most fully and perfectly reveals her. And beauty (which is truth objectified—spiritual harmonies made visible) is present in any thing or any person in proportion to the degree in which that thing or person expresses Truth—in proportion to the fulness with which that in which we see the beauty to be is capable of rendering the harmonies of being.

“And of all the Spirit’s vestures the most complete is character. Of all the visible forms by means of which she can express the harmonies of her life, this is the most capable of expressing them, and therefore the most susceptible of beauty.

“For character is the garment which, by the inexhaustible power of its living will, the Spirit is continually weaving, and it is beautiful in proportion as the Spirit wills in harmony with Truth. Therefore is holiness—which is the spirit’s sympathetic vibration in harmony with the eternal truth of the Eternal Will—the highest and completest form of beauty.

“Hence it is only when the Soul finds *that*, that she can contemplate her object with pure delight; it is only when she expresses herself thus that she can reveal all the wealth of her nature.

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“But alas for the Soul! Alas for Love! Her development is too often arrested; she too often never attains her birthright, never finds that priceless treasure—a living, holy, answering love.

“Instead of allowing physical beauty—the Spirit’s outward garb and material embodiment—to usher her into the holiest of all—to bring her face to face with the Living Fact—the Soul lingers in the outer courts. She is ensnared by the outward and visible. She lusts instead of loves. She tries to feed on husks instead of on the Heaven-prepared manna of love; and in consequence presents in her relations with the finite object of her choice the sorrowful spectacle of marriages without affection, and homes in which the light of love never shines and in relation with the Infinite, love of the world, and the mad endeavour to grasp the things which it has to offer, instead of love for that Eternal Spirit who all the time is holding her in His arms, and yearning with unutterable longing to win her love, and to make her a partaker in all the inexhaustible riches of His heart.

“I have said that love is a personal relationship, and have been keeping in view, and placing side by side, the two objects on which it can worthily fix its attention—the finite spirit and the Infinite Spirit.

“But let it not be supposed that they have an equal claim on Love’s regard, or are both equally capable of satisfying her need.

“Sweet is human love—when two souls are ‘one’ in a rapturous harmony which, without break or flaw, pervades the entire being of each; when heart

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beats in sympathy with heart, and in the minds of each

“Thought leaps out to wed with thought.  
Ere thought can wed itself to speech!”

“We will throw no disparagement on human love; we will assign no limits to its fulness; we will not attempt to measure its surpassing sweetness. But the Soul has infinite cravings, which no finite being can satisfy. Not on even the most perfect human affection can it securely rest; not in even the most loving of human hearts can it find a home.

“The Soul has no haven of rest but the heart of the Eternal. Its birthright is the right to commune with the Infinite Love, and with this alone can it be satisfied.

“Talk of satisfying it with a world, with a universe, with all the infinite material with which the Time-Spirit weaves the garments of the Eternal, or all the treasures of thought which it lavishes on their construction! Why, you cannot even satisfy it with all the immeasurable wealth of love which is stored up in all the souls that God has made!

“God alone can satisfy the wants of the Soul. His Infinite love alone suffices for her infinite need. Let her wander where she will, let her strive to find a home where she will, she can never find it except in the heart of God.

“And it is for this reason that human love—love, the type—never reaches its greatest fulness, never experiences its richest sweetness, till it is supplemented by the Divine Love—love, the anti-type.

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"This is the supreme attraction which enables two souls—like two suns—to circle round each other in perfect harmony, while at the same time they are like two wandering stars which madly dash through space, they know not whither, till suddenly the dark orb of death sweeps over their path and separates them; one is taken, and the other left: they lose sight of each other in the darkness, and henceforward fare on apart and lonely forever.

"But rendered immortal by a mutual love centered in the Infinite Love, human love never dies. Why should they who thus love fear the brief eclipse of death? Is not the beloved one who is taken in the Everlasting Arms, even as is the one who is left? Have they not both still all the wealth of the Everlasting Love to satisfy their need? Do they not know that Love has separated them for a time, in order that it may increase a thousand-fold the sweetness of their love for each other and for it? Yes; for a time they are called to sojourn in different mansions of their Father's house; but the house is their Father's, and the call is the call of love.

"This, then, is life—even the life of love. For this the soul was created, to this Heaven is ceaselessly striving to lead it.

"To demonstrate the beauty, and the joyfulness, and the satisfyingness of this life, the Eternal has filled the world with innumerable types and illustrations of it, the chief of which is human love. By means of these the Soul is enabled to realize to some extent how full and how blessed is the life which she has been created to enjoy.

"But the picture-alphabet of love which these

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types present only enables man to learn love's simplest words and easiest sentences—only enables him faintly to apprehend what life is. Life in its fulness they cannot represent, because the fulness of the Eternal Love is measureless.

“But if any man craves for a completer picture—a more perfect type—of the Infinite Life and Love, let him look to the Teacher of Nazareth, let him explore the depths of the heart of the Man Christ Jesus.”

Without comment I proceed to give further selections treating of the same theme.

“The mystery of the love of God manifested in Jesus Christ has two sides, but only one can be seen; it is an infinite orb, but it only shows us one face.

“Behind the face which we see, we know that there exists the measureless volume of the orb; nay, we can even compute what its volume is, or at any rate determine that it is incomputably great. But we can never see it. Like the moon in its circling round the earth, wherever and whenever we look on it we are always contemplating the same face. We can *feel* the solid volume behind the attractive power which it exerts upon us; but, strive as we may, we cannot catch any glimpse of it save one. No light comes from the Being of God except that which shines in the face of Jesus Christ.\*

“No *light*, I say. Nevertheless, it is necessary

\* My friend, I am convinced, did not intend this statement to be taken absolutely. He freely admitted that “broken gleams” of God are to be seen in Nature and in Humanity, but these, he held, are all included in the Christ-revelation.



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that we should recognize the fact that the solid volume of the orb is there—that the face is not a flat disc, but the surface of an infinite sphere; that immeasurable depths of substance are behind the appearance; that the life and the love which Jesus Christ manifested are a manifestation of the life and the love of an Eternal and Infinite Being.

“The necessity of this was clearly recognized by the New Testament writers. Though they rightly laid most stress on the revelation, they did not fail to keep in mind the Eternal Fact which it revealed—the Living Reality from which it originated.

“That Eternal Fact, that Living Reality is the heart of the Eternal—the love of God. That is the solid orb which the face reveals, without which there could have been no face—no revelation.

“And this, though it has been often ignored since, the New Testament writers, as I have said, were always careful to keep in mind.

“‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.’ ‘He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.’ ‘God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.’ ‘In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him.’

“Thus do they keep in mind the hidden volume of this mystery of love; thus do they recognize that great, incomprehensible fact of the self-renunciation of the Eternal—that everlasting, unfathomable truth of His Life which has its completest manifestation in the cross of Jesus Christ.

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"It has been the failure to keep this truth in mind which has allowed room for so many partial and erroneous doctrines of the atonement to be formulated. There is hardly a single theory on this subject before the world at the present time which does adequate justice to this fact of the Life of God. The recognition of this prime factor at once renders untenable those views of the atonement which have generally been accepted, and necessitates important modifications in those truer but still inadequate ones which of late years have been steadily gaining ground.

"As a *prime factor* in the problem of the atonement, the love of God has never yet received adequate recognition; God's love has generally been regarded as divisible by His justice. But that is as absurd as it is untrue. A part cannot comprehend the whole. Love embraces justice, not justice love; the ultimate truth of the Being of God is not that He is just, but that He is living, palpitating, self-renouncing Love.

"When this fact (that a passionate self-renunciation is the ultimate truth of the Life of God) is once apprehended, the atonement (at-one-ment, be it ever remembered) is seen in an altogether new light. It can no longer be regarded as a dead, mechanical thing—a cold-blooded, judicial arrangement: it becomes instinct with life. It is seen to be a Personal self-sacrifice, the giving up of Himself by the Living God who is Spirit on behalf of the spirits he has made. No types or images, therefore, are adequate to body it forth except those which human life affords. It is a giving up of *self*, such a

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willing, conscious selfsurrender as that of which human hearts alone are capable.

“To know what this Life of Love, which is the Life of God, is in its fulness, is impossible. It is infinite; unfathomably deep and wide and high; through all eternity we shall not be able to exhaust its heights and depths. That is the mystery of Love—the mystery of Life, the darkside of the orb. But what it is in its nature and essence we can know. For it was enshrined once in a living human Heart, it was manifested once in a living Self-sacrifice. It ‘was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld the glory of it, even glory as of an Only Begotten from a Father, full of grace and truth.’

“What measureless love that Heart contained, what depths of self-renunciation that Self-sacrifice exhibited, the world has been recognizing more and more fully as the ages have moved on. The world is coming to see that there, and there alone, is a satisfactory and satisfying Manifestation of the Eternal. It is being brought to acknowledge that all the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ. It is learning to gauge the depths of the Divine Love by the depths of Christ’s self-renunciation, and is continually finding afresh that they are measurelessly deep.”

“Nature cannot fully reveal the fact that God is love.

“That is to say, she cannot testify to that truth with the fulness and clearness which man’s capacities demand. Man can comprehend that truth in a thousandfold greater fulness than any with which Nature

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is capable of revealing it, and consequently her expressions of it fail to give him complete satisfaction,—nay, in many cases bewilder and perplex him.

“This, indeed, is inevitable until he sees the Truth embodied in a form suited to his capacities and needs, and reads by its fuller light the partial revelation of the truth which Nature gives. Till he has thus seen the truth bodied forth with satisfying fulness, he cannot possibly interpret the hieroglyphics in which Nature writes it for him.

“The only manifestation of the Fact of Love which can satisfy the soul of man must appear in a human soul. That is the only medium through which the Eternal Love can display itself with a fulness at all worthy of itself, and at all adequate to the satisfying of human needs.

“And it has thus revealed itself in the Man Christ Jesus. There we see the fact revealed with a fulness and clearness which leaves nothing to be desired, which satisfies our deepest longings, meets our loftiest conceptions, realizes our heavenliest dreams, and enables us to decipher Nature’s otherwise illegible inscriptions.

“It is the failure to lay hold of the truth as thus revealed, and the exclusive fixing of the attention on those imperfect manifestations of it which Nature gives, which has led so many men in these days to such despairing conclusions concerning Nature’s God.

“‘Nature, red in tooth and claw  
With ravine, shrieks against the creed’

[that God is love], Tennyson sings; and from the

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standpoint from which he was writing this must ever appear to be the truth.

“No one by a scientific examination of Nature can ever hope to arrive at satisfying conclusions concerning the Eternal. The form which the Fact of Love takes in Nature must ever appear more to contradict than to affirm the truth; till the tropes and metaphors, and strange and startling disguises in which it is therein enshrouded are read in the light of Love’s perfect Manifestation.

“Such views therefore as the poet,—in a mood produced by sorrow, but nevertheless depicting most faithfully the spirit of the age, gives expression to in the lines quoted above, or which John Stuart Mill embodies in his ‘Essay on Nature,’ need neither surprise nor alarm us. They are what we should naturally expect from men whose hearts and minds have not been illuminated by the light of a satisfying love. They are ignorant guesses at hieroglyphics which they have attempted to read without possessing the clue to their meaning; they are attempts to open the door of spiritual truth without a key.

“How differently, in the light of the higher truth in which He lived, did Jesus Christ read Nature! To Him she spoke not of cruelty and wrong, but of goodness and love. The beauty of the grass was a beauty which His Father had given it; the lilies were His Father’s care; and He watched the dying of the sparrows without a pang, because He knew that not one of them fell to the ground without His Father’s knowledge. Thus Nature to Him bore perpetual witness to the truth of God’s Fatherhood. He read that sublime fact in every line of the vis-

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ible creation; the whole universe was an illustration, infinitely varied and exquisitely harmonized, of that fundamental truth.

“No man who has neglected to utilize his spiritual faculties, and who has failed to establish a correspondence with the Spiritual Environment, *i.e.* failed to enter into a communion with the God who is Spirit similar to that which Jesus Christ had, and which He showed to be possible to man—no man who does not thus live up to the level of his capabilities, can hope to interpret aright Nature’s manifestations of the Eternal Spiritual Fact. When the heart knows God as Father, the mind will learn to read more and more clearly the poem of love which is written in Nature, and will derive inexhaustible delight from the apprehension of the glorious truth which in such innumerable forms and with such a boundless wealth of illustration, is therein expressed.

“But not till then! Of itself, unaided by the heart, the mind can never understand it: and if the heart does not seek and find satisfaction where alone it can be found, but vainly leans on the mind, its cry for light will meet with no response from a universe in which, as the mind reads it, the clearest embodiment of the truth of Love is to be found in the reign of stern, inexorable law.”

“Love is energy of giving. In whatever form and in whatever degree it is manifested, this is a fundamental characteristic of love—a giving up, a sacrifice, a dying.

“No man can apprehend the nature of love till he



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has grasped that truth. Nay, till it has become a vital truth to him, no man can be said to live. His own being, and the being of creation, must continue a riddle to him until they are illuminated by that Divine truth. For

“‘Life is energy of love.’

“Living, loving, and giving all mean the same: they are simply different methods of expressing the truth concerning Being, Spirit, The Real, The Eternal Fact, That Which Is, which in innumerable ways, and in many different degrees of fulness, takes form in the universe.

“The possibilities of life vary with the capabilities for giving expression to love—that is, for *giving*. And herein consists the difference between man and the rest of Nature, in that he is capable of higher forms of sacrifice—diviner dyings—than any other part of the creation.

“Man alone is capable of *self*-sacrifice, *voluntary* renunciation, *conscious* self-surrender: Being in creation, and part of it, he yet stands above it and aloof from it in virtue of his self-consciousness—that highest and boldest mode in which the Eternal Fact objectifies itself—losing itself in finite personalities, that it may find itself again in hearts that throb with conscious love.

“That this losing of itself has even gone as far as the self-isolation of those thus endowed, is a fact to which the present state of man abundantly testifies. But could this stupendous embodiment of love have been accomplished without this stupendous loss? Without this utter self-surrender of the

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Infinite Life—this complete throwing away of itself in finite personalities—could the rapturous finding of itself again in spirits which call it ‘Father’ be possible to it?

“We touch here an unfathomable mystery, which the mind of man is not capable of comprehending. To some such outpouring of itself—some such infinite self-abnegation on the part of that Eternal Energy of Love which is the Cause of all things the Life of life, the Great I Am—must we ultimately trace the origin of the universe and man. But we cannot grasp so stupendous a thought: when we come to formulate it, it shrivels up into conceptions whose inadequacy is painfully apparent—as of a God playing at hide-and-seek with Himself, or of One who is nothing more than an infinite being.

“Let us leave matters which are too high for us. Let it suffice us that a Living Love has created us, and endowed us with some of its own Divine Energy, thereby enabling us consciously to share in the fulness of its own rapturous Life.”

“The difference between man’s possibilities of life, and the possibilities of the rest of the creation, is expressed in the word ‘self.’ Man is nobler than Nature by how much *self*-sacrifice is nobler than unconscious and involuntary surrender. The heights of life to which a man can soar transcend the limits imposed on the rest of the creation by how much voluntary giving exceeds involuntary sacrifice.

“For all Nature’s life is tuned to the key-note of sacrifice; but the sacrifice is not conscious and voluntary, but blind and unintelligent. That which

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is the peculiar characteristic of humanity being absent, love perforce is obliged to take the form of law—to manifest itself in an unbroken and necessitated orderliness, which rules the entire life of those beneath its sway. There is no room for spontaneity, no room for choice. There is surrender, but not *self-surrender*; a continual dying, but not a conscious participation and a joyful acquiescence in the act. The surrender is either wholly mechanical and voluntary, or it is accomplished in opposition to, not in sympathy with, the feelings of that which surrenders itself.

“In only a few—a very few—cases does sacrifice in Nature seem to ally itself to the voluntariness of human self-sacrifice. In the majority of creatures no harmony can be traced between the instinct of life, and this grand law which rules it, and their surrender is made in fear and pain, unaccompanied by that glad submission which is possible to man, and which enables him to apprehend the law as good, and willingly to co-operate with it, and joyfully to live by it.

“These peculiarities of the forms, and these limitations of the fulness, in which the Fact of Love bodies itself forth in Nature, are necessitated by the material through which it works.

“Whatever ‘matter’ may be, and whether it have any real existence or not, it is certain that the Eternal objectifies Himself in it with less completeness than that for which humanity craves; that man is capable of apprehending Him more clearly, and of sympathizing with Him more fully, than His revelation of Himself in Nature permits of.

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"Nature is only the outer skirt of the Eternal, and it were to be expected that the outer garments of the Ineffable Spirit would be spread with an easy gracefulness which would permit of no minute delineation of that which they enshrine. Material things are the lowest forms in which He objectifies Himself, and it were to be expected that His lowest projections into the sphere of time and space would but partially reveal His infinite fulness. Nevertheless, under the limitations thus imposed, the Fact of Love manifests that energy which is its fundamental characteristic with startling clearness and with unbroken universality.

"The atoms are called to surrender themselves—*i.e.* their individuality—in order to form compound substances. The soil is called to give itself up in order to nourish life in tree and plant. These, in turn, are called to surrender themselves in order to give support to animal life, and a large portion of the animal kingdom is supported by the death of living creatures. Go where we will in Nature, we find this law of surrender in operation. It is a world, as has been well said, where every thing *eats* everything else—a fact which may well appal when the nature of the Law of Love, which is the Law of Life, is not understood, but which can be viewed calmly when this law has been apprehended, and the heart and the life have been brought into joyful harmony with it, by contemplating and adoring the infinite beauty and sublimity of that completest manifestation of self-renouncing love which history records—the most Divine self-sacrifice of which the

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mind can conceive—the death of the Man Christ Jesus.”

After some hesitation, I have decided to insert here a poem which I have found among my friend's MSS. I have hesitated to do so because I am not sure if its artistic merit is sufficient to warrant its insertion; but the thought which it attempts to express is identical with that expressed in the previous note, and is, I think, sufficiently remarkable to justify me in giving the reader this further expression of it.

### “A SONG OF DOUBT AND FAITH.

“He sat with blue waves breaking  
    In foam at his feet,  
Wooing the rocks, and making  
    Harmony sweet.  
The west wind gently was blowing  
    Fresh from the sea.  
The Sun overhead was showing  
    How bright he could be;  
The birds around him were singing,  
    Happy and gay;  
Flowers beside him were flinging  
    Their odours away.  
And his soul was filled with the gladness,  
    The beauty and light,  
And sorrow and unrest and sadness  
    For a time took flight.  
And lifting his heart in thanksgiving  
    To the Maker of all,  
He cried, ‘Thou Supreme, Ever-living,  
    Creator! I fall  
At Thy feet, and adore Thee and praise Thee,  
    And, feeling ’tis meet,

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I too in this hour upraise Thee  
    An offering sweet.  
For oft though Thy footsteps are hidden  
    From Thy creatures' eyes,  
And doubts of Thy goodness, unbidden,  
    In our minds arise,  
Yet surely the earth, sky, and ocean—  
    Could our ears catch the strain,  
And, amid the world's restless commotion,  
    Hear the glad refrain—  
One glorious chant of laudation  
    Perpetually raise,  
And the voice of Thy boundless creation  
    Is unbroken praise.'

"But cloud-wrack stealthily floated  
    Across the sky,  
And a blast of wind, which denoted  
    A storm drawing nigh,  
Swept the Sea, now hueless, and heaving  
    Like a monster laid prone,  
Her sad waves the hushed stillness cleaving  
    With 'plaining and moan.  
The trees, their pendant leaves rustling,  
    Perpetually sighed;  
The kine in the field-corners hustling,  
    Sniffed the air, helpless-eyed;  
The flowers ceased dispensing their sweetness  
    And hung their heads down;  
While, to consummate the completeness  
    Of Nature's deep frown,  
The birds, in the thickets remaining,  
    Dead silence kept,  
To utter one chirrup disdaining,  
    While the skies wept,  
And, as if bemoaning the madness  
    Of the lightning and rain,  
All Nature an air took of sadness  
    And unrest and pain.



## LOVE

“And he looked, and he saw that the ocean,  
    With fuming and roar,  
With angry and savage commotion,  
    Was gnawing the shore:  
And he thought how the bee robs the flowers,  
    How the birds eat the flies,  
How the hawk the weak bird overpowers,  
    How everything dies:  
He thought how with pains, woes, and terrors,  
    With strife and unrest,  
The whole world—which God’s nature mirrors—  
    Is ceaseless oppressed:  
And he cried, ‘Thou mysterious, frightful,  
    Inscrutable Power,  
If Thy world which awhile seemed delightful,  
    Can change in an hour;  
If pain is concealed beneath gladness,  
    And death beneath life;  
If Nature’s deep undertone sadness  
    Proclaimeth, and strife;  
If Death the supporter of Life is,  
    The pitiless claw  
The emblem of Being; if strife is  
    Existence’s law;—  
Is it possible righteous to deem Thee  
    Or loving or good,  
When such in Thy works I behold Thee,  
    And such Nature’s mood?’

“But the raging hurricane thundered  
    Itself to rest;  
Th’ opposing cloud-armies sundered;  
    The brightening west  
Grew into a splendour of glory  
    And wonder untold,  
Transmuting the cloud-masses hoary  
    To crimson and gold;  
The voluminous folds of the cloud-wrack  
    Piled themselves in the east;

## LOVE

The wind-driven thunder-king flashed back  
Defiance, then ceased;  
The victorious Sun, with a splendour  
Of colour and light  
Too brilliant for artist to render—  
Dazzling the sight—  
Bathed the heavens with gold and carnation,  
Lit earth with its rays,  
And summoned the whole of Creation  
To worship and praise.  
The trees, their foliage glistening,  
Laughed rosy red;  
The grasses and flowers, standing listening,  
Tears of joy shed;  
The birds, their voices upraising,  
Sang with delight,  
The poem Heaven wrote with amazing  
Radiance of light.  
And when, to his ocean-bed sinking,  
The Sun kissed the sea,  
And the stars peeped out one by one, blinking  
Such splendour to see,  
As a pathway of glory and brightness  
The dancing waves paved—  
The waves, which earth's warm feet with lightness  
Fondled and laved:  
As he saw that the heavens without ceasing  
Gave themselves to the earth,  
Thereby bringing ever-increasing  
Glory to birth;  
As he saw that in giving, rejoicing,  
The flowers lived and loved;  
That the birds, the same key-note voicing,  
Sacrifice proved;  
As he saw that the insect which sported  
On the wind's breath  
Rejoiced while it lived, and supported  
Life by its death;

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As he noted that Life's pulses ever  
    Beat fervent and warm,  
But continually strove to dis sever  
    Themselves from *one* form;  
As he saw that a vast tide of Being  
    Through all things flowed,  
But stayed not—a strict law decreeing  
    Life to Life owed;  
As he saw with a passion for giving  
    The whole world possessed;—  
The Creator's great 'Secret of Living'  
    Upon his soul pressed,  
And he cried, "O Perpetual Dispenser  
    Of wondrous Life!  
Tho' the longer we gaze the intenser  
    Appeareth the strife,  
And the heavy travail of Creation  
    Revealed to our sight;  
Though, when scorning attempts at evasion,  
    And striving aright  
To read what Thy Cosmos revealeth,  
    To confess we are fain  
The chorus of praise scarce concealeth  
    The loud shriek of pain;  
Tho' Death strongest Life overpowers  
    Since everything dies;—  
Yet still, when these weak minds of ours  
    Are strongest, we rise  
To the hope—to the heart faith is given  
    Which leads us to trust—  
That Thou, the Creator of heaven  
    And earth, art just;  
And if Thy Creation's full chorus  
    Upon our ears burst,  
And we heard the sphere-music o'er us  
    Resounding, as erst,  
When the morning stars all in union  
    Sang and rejoiced,

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And their music the heavenly communion  
    Echoed, full-voiced;  
If we the harsh discords our feeling  
    Alone can surmise  
Could adjust to the symphony pealing  
    Along the skies;—  
Then surely the word to proclaim Thee  
    Human lips could not frame,  
The Name alone worthy to name Thee  
    Would be a supreme Name:  
Our loftiest, noblest conceptions  
    Of what Thou art  
Would be reckoned but trembling reflections—  
    (Such as impart  
Slow rippling waters kissed by  
    A wind distressed  
Of some hill, when enveloping mists lie  
    Upon its crest)  
So dim, so devoid of completeness,  
    We then should confess  
Our thoughts of Thee, matched with the sweetness  
    Of Thy perfectness.

“I this evening have caught one harmonious,  
    One perfect note  
From Infinite Being's euphonious,  
    Clear-voiced throat;  
One chord of the music of Being  
    Has struck on my ear,  
My mind from uncertainty freeing,  
    My heart from fear.  
I see that the key-note of Being  
    Assuredly lies,  
By a law of Thy perfect decreeing,  
    In self-sacrifice:  
I see that unceasing giving  
    Is Nature's chief bliss,  
The innermost secret of living  
    Self-forgetfulness:

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And discern (tho' the links of connection  
I cannot prove)  
The whole great world a reflection  
Of Thy Heart of Love.

“Yes, *Love!* To this final conclusion  
I rise (or I fall) :  
'Tis a faith: if it be a delusion—  
If the facts which appal,  
Which I see in Creation around me,  
True indices are  
Of Thy character—if Thou hast bound me  
(Thou sitting afar,  
Enjoying the sound of my wailing,  
The sight of my pain)  
To a world where perpetual railing,  
Tho' hopelessly vain,  
Were the only fit adoration  
On Thee to bestow,  
Who hast made Love my proper vocation,  
And chained me to woe,—  
Then I curse Thee, Thou terrible Power,  
I curse and defy,  
Defy Thee as hour by hour  
I miserably die!  
Defy Thee throughout all the ages  
Of infinite time,  
With curses pay Thee the wages  
Due to Thy crime!  
“But I will not believe that delusion  
And error and wrong  
Are the keys which unlock the confusion  
Of earth. I am strong  
(Strong or weak) to hope and believe  
Thou hast made us for bliss;  
That Thy creatures Thou wilt not deceive;  
That benevolence is  
The master-note of Thy Being;  
That Nature but proves

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(In figures too vast for our seeing)  
How Thy Heart loves.  
For Love is continual giving—  
Perpetually dies—  
Discovers the bliss of its living  
In self-sacrifice.  
There, I hold, there, if anywhere, lieth  
The key to Thy Life:  
Nature dies because Love ever dieth;  
Her ceaseless strife  
But mirrors Thy ceaseless endeavour  
Thyself to devote  
To the good of Thy creatures forever.  
That is the note  
Which, with never a moment's cessation,  
By night and by day,  
The voice of Thy boundless creation  
Soundeth for aye;  
That is the note which resounded  
Full-toned and clear.  
When the Crown of Humanity founded  
Heaven's kingdom here;  
Thine innermost Nature revealing,  
That was the note  
By His life, His teaching, His healing,  
Incessant He smote;  
That was the note which—defying  
Heaven and earth to compete—  
He struck when He brought by His dying  
The world to His feet.'

"He ceased. In the deep heavens o'er him  
Night's curtains were hung:  
In infinity's chambers before him  
Unnumbered lamps swung:  
The after-glow slowly was fading  
Out of the sky;  
But the west a faint light was still shading  
Delicately.



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In the clear east a silvery whiteness  
    Announced that soon  
The world with the floods of her brightness  
    Would be bathed by the Moon.  
The earth slept; the sea, lulled to stillness,  
    Reposed on the breast  
Of the shore, with the perfect tranquillity  
    Of dreamless rest.  
Peace reigned supreme on the ocean,  
    Peace on the shore,  
And peace in his heart, where commotion  
    Had reigned before.  
Heaven's beauty and sweetness descended  
    Softly as dew  
On his soul: the conflict was ended;  
    He beheld the True.  
And the vision his spirit exalted  
    Fear and doubt above;  
No longer he questioned and halted;  
    He *knew*—God is Love."

"The universe is a poem of love which God is writing, and, as far as it goes, every line is perfect. Every form, every motion and change, every atom which goes to make up the phenomena which we call by that name, is in harmony with—is a manifestation of—the Ultimate Fact of Being: Love.

"The truth that God is Love, which we apprehend through the Christ-revelation, of necessity carries with it this corollary: No smallest fraction of the Great All which surrounds us can be out of harmony with—can be anything but a form of—the truth of Love.

"If the material universe appears otherwise to us, the fault does not lie in it, but in ourselves: it is a proof of our blindness and deadness, not of its

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imperfection. Its perfection is absolute; there is no flaw, no discord in it. It is Love objectified, *i.e.* the form which the Ultimate Fact of Love takes to us in virtue of our finiteness. Even thus and no otherwise can the Infinite orb itself to spirits conditioned like ourselves, in the present state of our development.

"I say that if the material universe appears to us otherwise than as a poem of love, the fault lies in ourselves—in our blindness and deadness.

"I cannot for a moment doubt the possibility of our being able to read every manifestation of the Non-Ego in the light of, and to harmonize it with, the highest truth concerning it which we are able to apprehend—the truth of Love. Love objectified it is, and love in every line of it we must be able to discover, who are able to apprehend the truth that God is Love.

"But the God who is Love, who thus objectifies Himself, does not suit His manifestations to our imperfections, weaknesses, and sins, but to our capabilities and potentialities.

"The universe is a revelation of truth, not as we do apprehend it, but as we may and can apprehend it. It is framed to delight and satisfy us when we exercise and rightly use all our faculties and powers, not when we misuse or fail to use them. In other words, the universe can only be apprehended as the manifestation of Love, and be seen in all its parts to be in harmony with this truth, by those who are fully alive—who have correspondence with it in all the ways of which human nature permits. Falling short of this, man must misread it; its harmony must

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appear to be discords, its light darkness.

"It is only too evident that the vast majority of men do thus misread it. Very far from being a poem of love is the universe to most men; very far are they from attaining to harmony in their relations with it.

"And they lay the blame on the universe, and harbour all sorts of doubts and fears concerning Him who made it.

"Oh, foolish purblind men! Will you never be taught to look for the evil in yourself—to open your eyes to all the infinite wonder and beauty and *rightness* which surround you; to live, instead of (as at present) miserably existing?

"The universe is perfect as far as it goes—a poem of love, as I have said; but it can only be understood by those who exercise the God-given faculty of faith, and who tune their being to the key-note of love.

"And I am quite prepared to grant—indeed, it is clearly implied in the assertion that faith is necessary—that at present many lines, if not whole pages, of the poem cannot be understood even by the most loving heart.

"Therefore I have been careful to qualify my assertion that 'the universe is a poem of love' by saying, 'as far as it goes.'

"For there is abundant evidence that the poem is not yet completed. God is still writing it. He has furnished us with hints—nay, with clear indications—as to its *dénoûment*; but not until that is accomplished shall we be able to understand how perfect every line has been which has led up to the

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splendid consummation. At present we have to take much on trust; not until we have attained to the liberty of the glory of the sons of God shall we be able fully to understand how right and necessary the 'subjection to vanity' and the groaning and travailing have been."

"The mystery of pain has pressed heavily on innumerable human hearts, and has been to many minds one of the greatest stumbling-blocks to the belief in the goodness of God.

"When illuminated, however, by the light of love, it becomes a mystery not dark at all—except with excess of light. Far from detracting from the goodness of the Eternal, it reveals to us new and unfathomable depths of His glorious perfection.

"That pain is an essential factor in the scheme of things of which we form a part, cannot be denied. No doctrine of 'the Fall,' no theory which considers it as merely the result of 'sin'—*i. e.* of the abuse or misuse of faculties and functions—can satisfactorily account for its existence. It is evidently an enduring peculiarity in the constitution of things—a fundamental characteristic of the universe. Life has been created to endure pain as surely as to enjoy pleasure; to suffer is as much its prerogative as to enjoy.

"Much of the mystery in which pain is enshrouded in the minds of the majority of men is due to the non-recognition of this fact.

"Men have shut their eyes to the truth—they have ignored the manifest fact which the universe presents to them—that pain is one of the essential

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factors of life. They have based their ideas of life on the preconception that *pleasure* is the end of existence, and, viewing the universe in the light of this false premise, it has presented itself to them as an insoluble riddle; the dark nightmare of pain has forever haunted them. Ignoring it in their conceptions of life, it has avenged itself upon them (as all neglected truths ever do) by confounding their conclusions; they have attempted to hold, and to live by, a theory of life which the indisputable logic of facts has been continually pronouncing absurd.

"It once being clearly recognized that pain is not merely an excrescence, but a fundamental peculiarity of life, the question inevitably arises—What end does it subserve? What results does it accomplish, or can it accomplish? What heights and glories of life does it place within our reach?

"That it must subserve *some* end, and that that end must be so supremely lofty as not only to justify but to glorify the means—these are assumptions which in the one case our intellectual constitution and all intellectual experience, in the other our spiritual constitution and our spiritual experience, demand and justify. For Nature shows us nothing but an endless chain of causes and effects—causes which are themselves effects, and effects which in the very act of becoming such are changed into fresh causes; and consequently we cannot conceive of pain—however clearly it may be regarded as an effect due to traceable causes—otherwise than as a cause whereby new series of results are produced:—it must subserve some glorious end.

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“ ‘Glorious,’ I say, for a true spiritual faith—our spiritual instincts when allowed free and full scope—can never do otherwise than hold that all the ends for which Nature works are *good*—right with a rightness which is absolute—perfect with all the perfectness of the Infinite Spirit. This conviction a man with a true spiritual faith will ever hold, however tardily the ‘evidence of things not seen,’ which faith supplies, may be confirmed by the long-linger-ing wisdom of experience.

“As long as the nature of the Spiritual Fact—*i.e.* of God—remains unrecognized by the soul, the mystery of pain must remain a dark one. Indeed, the whole creation must remain an insoluble riddle to all who have not found that key.

“But when once the divine truth that God is Love is apprehended (apprehended not intellectually, but spiritually) and the soul begins to know

“ ‘How Love might be, hath been indeed, and is,’

then does this mystery—and, indeed, many mysteries—become illuminated; and if some still elude clear apprehension, their glorious perfectness is *felt*, and a sufficiency—nay, more than a sufficiency, an overwhelming flood—of the glory which they enshrine, streams in upon the soul.

“When the truth of love is known it becomes for ever impossible to desire or even to conceive of a universe free from pain. Love would not be love were pain impossible.

“This may well seem unintelligible, or even absurd, to all those (and such the vast majority of men are) who base their lives on the axiom that



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life is a getting; who make self an end, and the welfare of self—in one or other of the various ways in which that result can (presumably) be achieved—their chief concern.

“But it will appear neither unintelligible nor absurd to those who have apprehended the sublime truth of Love. For the light with which that truth illuminates the soul reveals the fact that life is not a getting, but a giving—that its joys are not those of possession, but of surrendering, not of enjoying, but of enduring.

“The true life of man—the Life of Love which is the Life of God—is not centred in self, but in others. It finds itself in losing itself. It surrenders itself utterly that others may be blessed, dies in order to impart its life to them. And thus dying, it ever finds its life renewed—renewed with unutterable joys which drown all its sorrows, with a perfection of bliss which swallows up all its pain.

“This Divine mystery of life must for ever elude our comprehension. That is to say, we can never hope to understand it fully. There must ever remain heights and depths of it which thought can never reach, and to which the soul must continue to aspire; it is as unfathomable as the Heart of God.

“But even the feeble apprehension of it which we have at present (and which must continue to fall short of what is possible to us as long as that supreme manifestation of it which we have in Jesus Christ remains unexhausted) enables us to regard pain very differently from the way in which it is ordinarily regarded by men. If the end which it subserves is only partially revealed, it is still

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revealed with sufficient clearness to enable us not only to reconcile its existence with the goodness of the Creator, but to regard it as a most significant indication of the fulness of life (and consequently the fulness of blessedness, for the two are co-ordinate) which He has placed within our reach.

“For were pain impossible, I do not see how it could be possible for man to attain to that life of Love which is God’s Life; I do not see how that Divine energy of giving, which Love is, could be created within him.

“To attain to the life of self-sacrifice it is necessary that man should be made capable of a self-sacrifice which is real, *i. e.* painful; for it is impossible to conceive of self-sacrifice which does not involve pain and loss. Man must be capable of suffering if he is to attain to that life of victorious enduring which is true life.

“The measure of true life is not gain, but loss; not man’s power of enjoying pleasure, but his power of enduring pain.

“And such a power man undoubtedly possesses; though now, alas! for the most part it is misused, and he suffers the pain without participating in the glorious life which it can produce.

“But not for ever shall man thus continue blindly to suffer, without reaping the harvest of his pain. He shall be made alive. At present, while he ignorantly strives to get, his suffering seems vain, his pain to be utter loss. But it is not so in reality. For even thus is the Eternal teaching him what true life is; even thus is He inducting him into His own eternal blessedness. And when his

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eyes are opened, and he learns not grudgingly to suffer, but willingly to conform to and co-operate with the perfect Law of Life—to suffer and be strong—then shall the perfect bliss of living take possession of his soul, and he shall remember no more the anguish for joy that he has become alive—alive with the life of God.”

“God forbid that I should make light of the world’s pain, in which the whole creation groaneth and travaileth! To human eyes—which in contemplating it must ever be half-blinded by tears—its light must often appear darkness, its glory gloom.

“To contemplate it serenely, in the light of the glorious end which is being accomplished by it, is not vouchsafed to man, who is not yet alive with the life which it begets, but is still only being made alive. How can he help writhing under the anguish, seeing that it is real and present, and as yet has not been consummated by the glorious birth? Let it not be supposed that it is possible, or ever will be possible, to annihilate the reality of that anguish by any forestalling of the joys which it, and it alone, can usher in. The anguish is real, and the reality of the present pain must often hide from the soul which endures it the prospect, and even the hope of the resultant joy. The primary condition of complete self-renunciation is that he who thus renounces does not see that it is good; how else could he lose himself utterly? Therefore must the cry continue to go up to Heaven from the lips of the suffering children of earth, ‘Father, if it be possible,

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let this cup pass'—going, however, to the ears of One who is too wise and good to grant the request; and men, like the lonely Christ, must tread the dark and unknown way which seems to lead to utter loss, before they can attain to the glorious resurrection which ushers them into the life which is eternal.

“Nevertheless, it cannot but be good to know that the dark cloud of pain has a silver lining, even though in some hours it is impossible to see it, or even to believe that it is there.

“Therefore let it be loudly proclaimed, in tones of clearest assurance throughout the length and breadth of this suffering earth, that all pain must end in good; let every sufferer know that it is life-giving, and brings a double blessing—to him who bravely endures it, and to the world for which it is endured.”

“It is not pain alone which becomes subservient to a beneficent purpose for those who have been quickened into true life by the touch of love. For this life has the power of assimilating all experiences—of gaining strength and nourishment from them, and of making them conducive to its growth. To it belongs the unique power of transmuting all opposition into helps, of absorbing and turning into the line of its own progress all forces, however apparently antagonistic. There is no experience which the soul of man can undergo, either in relation to its more immediate environment of mind and sense, or in relation to the world and the world's life (in which it perforce must have a share), which it cannot make conducive to development along the

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lines of love. To the soul that loves, all things tend to life. Love is the clue which will guide it through all the tortuous labyrinths of experience into the ever-widening halls of the Infinite.

“When a soul has linked itself to the Eternal Soul by the bonds of a living faith, and has become conscious of the love which ceaselessly outflows to it from this undying Source, the triumphant utilization of all experience for ends of life becomes a necessary corollary to this, its fundamental experience.

“All things must work together for good when that which is central in the life of men vibrates in harmony with that which is central in the Life of the Universe. When that fundamental adjustment has been accomplished, there is nothing for which they can work together except the expansion and the perfecting of that correspondence. Let what will come, of those experiences which the majority of men (who have not yet had their souls illuminated by the light of love) deem ‘evil’—pain, sorrow, bereavement, loss—to the soul that trusts and loves they cannot be evil; they cannot but be good; they cannot fail to foster and strengthen that Spirit of Life which hopeth all things, beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things; they cannot but conduce to the ripening and perfecting of those fruits of the Spirit which the tree of life bears so plentifully when once it has tapped with its roots the well-spring of the Eternal Love.

“That it is possible thus to transmute all human experience into gain; that there is one end which

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man can aim at which enables him to turn everything to use; that life may be able to produce this net result, higher Life;—is a fact which cannot be denied: there have been so many undoubted cases in which this result has been produced.

“And in this fact is to be found the only adequate solution of the mystery of human life. If there is any key at all to unlock the door of the mystery—if there is any royal road which it is possible for man to tread—it is *there*. When we have discovered that it is possible for every soul to transmute all the fleeting experiences of its present life into results which abide—when the truth is known that all the conditions of existence are framed to produce these results, and no others—that the full tide of the Universe sets steadily to spiritual ends—ends so perfectly and incomparably glorious that all the pain and woe which has to be endured while they are being accomplished cannot be reckoned even as dust in the balance against the perfect wisdom and beneficence of Him who ordered and who guides (for who that has tasted of the sweetness of the Life of Love can compare the pain of the travail by which it has been won with the fulness of its abiding bliss?):—when, I say, this is discovered and known, we can no longer speak of life as an insoluble riddle, we can no longer regard the world as bewildering and chaotic. Light streams in here which illuminates and glorifies every individual life, and which makes the entire history of the world Divine.

“With the spirit of all-conquering and all-enduring Love in our hearts, and the knowledge



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that this is also the Spirit of the Universe, where is there any room for doubt or fear? Much that is strange remains—much that we know but in part, or do not understand at all. But nothing too hard for the soul which loves to accept in faith; nothing too painful for it to endure. Strange, life may still be, and painful; there may be—there must be—much which requires the exercise of faith, much which tries and tests it. But all the experiences which life brings will place that soul in the possession of larger life—will continually open up before it sublimer revelations of the perfection and the surpassing sweetness of that Infinite Love in whom we live, and move, and have our being.”

“The spiritual life—the life of Love—springing, as it does, from a personal relationship between the individual soul and the Eternal, of necessity embraces the whole range of the soul’s activity—its outward and visible relations with the Great-All, as well as its inward and spiritual communion.

“This spiritual life is rooted in the Invisible. It lays hold of the unseen Heart of things with the tendrils of faith, and is rich in that spiritual communion which results therefrom. But it is no mere thing of the emotions—no mere private experience, peculiar to the inner life. The energy which it derives from this spiritual communion cannot expend itself within. It craves to express itself. It seeks to embody itself in some form. It shares in common with the whole of Nature—in common with its source—in that Divine impulse to objectify itself which is the distinguishing characteristic of Life.

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“To meet this fundamental need of the soul it has been furnished with faculties, physical and mental. These condition it; they form the appointed channels through which, and through which alone, its energy can find expression.

“And unless it were thus confined, how were life possible to it? Force unresisted, unconfined, lies latent and powerless; only when working against resistance does it *manifest* itself.

“Therefore has that spiritual energy which the soul *is* been conditioned, placed in a house of flesh, and furnished with the organ of mind whereby it apprehends the Great Spirit mediately, as phenomena, and under the peculiar conditions produced by the subjective impressions of time and space, and has relations with other similarly conditioned spirits. It has thus been provided with the means whereby its energy may express itself—tools where-with it can rear a noble temple—room to blossom and bear fruit after its kind.

“This, and this only, is the proper function of the bodily and intellectual powers of man; they are the means which the Eternal Love has provided whereby the soul may give expression to that energy of Love which is its true life.”

“What kind of active life in the world the spiritual energy of Love, when it has once been aroused in

“‘The abysmal deeps of Personality’

must ever produce, is evident from what we know concerning the nature of Love.

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"The spirit of Love is diametrically opposed to the spirit of the world. The principles which it assumes as the axioms of life are the exact reverse of those assumed by men in whom this Divine energy has not been stirred.

"The great majority of men, who have not yet awakened to the life of Love, rear their lives on the basis of self. They start from the assumption that self-interest is the primary law of life. The gratification of their own desires, the accomplishment of their own aims and wishes, is the end which they pursue,—either wholly regardless of the rights and needs of others, or only paying such attention to them as a prudent regard for their own interests dictates. To get is the motto of their lives.

"Love's motto, on the other hand, is to give. Self-renunciation is the axiom from which she works. Her life is pivoted on the needs of others; her delight is to give herself up in order to meet these—to die that others may be blessed. No limit does she set to her self-sacrifice: she gives her all; her life is as boundless as her own power to give, and humanity's power and need to receive.

"It is evident that since there is this radical difference in the principles on which these two kinds of life are based, there must be an equally radical difference in the results which follow from them. The entire fabric of life must differ in the two cases as widely as the Gothic architecture differs from the Egyptian, and if by chance there are any apparent similarities, they can only be apparent—in their intent and meaning they must be entirely dissimilar.

"From the very first moment when the life of

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Love is stirred within, the whole current of the life must be changed, and flow in a different channel. Not a single act or relationship can remain unaffected by the revolution which this change produces in all that a man strives after and desires—hates and loves.

“It is evident, however, that innumerable degrees of clearness of apprehension and of fulness of attainment are possible in the life of Love, and consequently innumerable degrees in the perfectness with which it is embodied in deeds.

“The man who has been awakened to the life of Love has entered the gate of true life, but all its infinite fulness remains yet to be explored. The height to which any man attains in that life depends upon his insight into the nature of Love: in proportion to that insight will be the beauty of his life as manifested in the world, and its divergence from, and contrast to, the life of those who are not yet alive.

“Whether there is any end to the fulness of the Life of Love—whether we shall ever cease ‘following on to know’—ever attain to full apprehension of this mighty Reality of Love which has created us and continually sustains us; whether at last we shall rest from endeavour, because we shall have attained to perfection of Light, and Life, and Love, who shall say?

“For the present it suffices the loftiest ambition and the most exalted dreams of good to contemplate, and to aspire to know in its fulness that revelation of unfathomable Love which we have in the Man Christ Jesus.”

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“Do I make light of the mystery in which this life of ours is enshrined? Do I too boldly and confidently talk of Truth, as if I had held her hand and gazed upon her open face?—I, who am but as other men, looking with human eyes on the earth and the stars and the bewildering complexity of human life, pondering with weak human faculties the problem of the Infinite which surrounds me?

“Do I forget the magnitude of that problem, and the magnitude of the issues involved in its solution—the stern facts of human life, and the binding necessity that at any cost the Truth, however unwelcome, should be known?

“Do I forget the awfulness of the tragedy which is being enacted daily around me—the passion and the pathos, the sorrow and the pain, the crime and the sin, of this struggling humanity?

“Do I forget the wrecked and disappointed lives, or the blighted hopes, the unsatisfied desires, the weariness and listlessness, and dark despair which fill so many human hearts?

“I trust not. I trust it has been no neglect on my part to face manfully all the facts of this wonderful and mysterious life of ours which has enabled me to arrive at conclusions so hopeful and cheering concerning it and the Author of it.

“If they are untrue, and it is but a dream I have dreamed; if I have reared my thought and shaped my life upon prepossessions, instead of upon solid facts, and thus have come to regard humanity with brighter hope than is warrantable, and have been led to call that which is the Cause of us and the cosmos by a better Name than it deserves;—then

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let all I have conceived and imagined perish, and in despairing silence let me wait till the dream dissolves, and I awake to the dread reality.

“But, as the years go on, the dream—if it be a dream—does not dissolve, but continually presses upon me with the appearance of greater reality. Can it be a dream and delusion which thus so persistently clings to me; which continually reveals brighter and more glorious vistas of joyous life; which perpetually floods me with the sweetness of a satisfying peace? I think not. But if it be, it is now too deep to be broken by anything that life can bring. Till death either confirms or shatters it, I must hold to what I have held to as the Truth so long;—that God is Love, and that a boundless life of perfect love is possible to man—is indeed the goal of humanity.

“Nay, I will not leave the matter thus. I will not write as if any lingering doubt haunted me that the vision I behold is unreal—that the truth I grasp is delusion. I do not dream; I am awake. I am alive in a living world, and in very deed this is the glorious truth—*God is Love*. All that is deepest in me craves for it; all that is noblest in me aspires to it; all that is truest in me affirms it.

“And it is confirmed by that unfathomable self-renunciation which was consummated on Calvary. This is the Truth, even as Truth is in Jesus. Living in that, I find continually greater satisfaction for all my wants; I find peace, joy, and ever-expanding Life.

“In the light of that measureless Love I can view the confusion and the sin of earth without dismay.



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Listening to Life's music with that master motive to guide me, I find the discords continually resolving themselves into harmony, and I know that those which remain are only parts of an oratorio too gloriously perfect to be compressed to the compass of my human ear. Regarded in that light, Nature is Divine; she is the mirror of the Eternal, and all her voices echo 'Love.'

"I live in the consciousness that underneath me are the everlasting arms of a Love as boundless as the love of Christ. The world is my Father's house. I read love in the sunlight and in the shadow, in the darkness and in the light, whether of Nature or of human life. I read the world in the light of the Son of Love, and it is illuminated therewith, and glows with the brightness of an ineffable glory.

"I see no limit to life short of the limitless Life of the Eternal; and I measure that Life by the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Man Christ Jesus.

"This is the truth, O, brother man! this indeed is the TRUTH: Thou art held in the hollow of the hand of the Eternal; thou art clasped to His bosom. And He is the ETERNAL LOVER."

I cannot do better than pause here in what has been to me an arduous but pleasing labour during the last few months.

I have lying before me a huge pile of my friend's MSS., containing a large number of reflections on a variety of subjects, which I have not seen my way to incorporate in this volume.

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Should this selection meet with a friendly reception, I may, at some future time, undertake the task of arranging and editing these.

Meanwhile I send this forth, in the hope that it may be helpful to some, and that from it may be gathered a not wholly inadequate impression of the thoughts and convictions of

“That friend of mine who lives in God.”







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